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THE PRINCESS

A Tennyson

TENNYSON'S

THE PRINCESS

EDITED

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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BOSTON, U.S.A.
GINN & COMPANY, PUBLISHERS
The Athenæum Press
1898

Educ. T 885.615.427.

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TO THE MEMORY OF

James Hadley

PROFESSOR IN YALE COLLEGE FROM 1848 TO 1872,
WHO, ALMOST ALONE AMONG HIS CONTEMPO-
RARIES, ANTICIPATED THE JUDGMENT
OF OUR LATER GENERATION
UPON THE MERITS
OF

THE PRINCESS

I BELIEVE IN PROGRESS
AND I WOULD CONSERVE THE HOPES OF MAN

TENNYSON TO AUBREY DE VERE

PREFACE.

WHEN the publishers requested me to undertake an edition of *The Princess*, I at first saw no reason why I should. I argued that there were already a sufficient number of annotated editions, — that of Wallace, with its minute and elaborate notes; of Rolfe, with its critical examination of the progress of the poem through the five editions by means of which it attained finality, those of 1847, 1848, 1850, 1851, and 1853; of Woodberry, with its masterly Introduction; of George, with its exaltation of Tennyson and the poets generally; and of Boynton, with its exclusion of all that could possibly be spared; besides the *Study* by Dawson, but for which all the editions named would have been distinctly poorer. Yet, on consideration, I found that none of these editions quite satisfied me; which is only another way of saying that I am I, with my own idiosyncrasies. One of my notions was that the student should be encouraged to do somewhat more for himself than the other editors seemed to think necessary; and another was that he should be shown how to direct his labor to the greatest advantage.

Where information was to be supplied, I usually discovered that one or another of my predecessors had provided what was needful; under these circumstances, I could either quote, giving credit; or paraphrase, with a fallacious show

of independence; or draw from original sources. To the second of these I have rarely resorted; where statements were especially accurate and felicitous I have employed the first means; and in many cases I have had recourse to the third method. I found that Dawson had very frequently been transcribed or adapted by his successors; and I had no option but to follow their example, only that I have adhered with considerable uniformity to the former of these methods of utilizing his labors. Besides this obligation, I have also to thank Mr. Dawson for his courteous permission to reprint Tennyson's letter in full. In doing so, I have taken the liberty of deviating in some typographical respects from the original as printed in Dawson's second edition of his *Study;* otherwise I believe my copy to be faithful.

I have brought forward some of the more eminent of Tennyson's critics, to present the different aspects under which his work can be regarded, in the belief that more is to be gained from a comparison of various opinions than from conning the views of any one individual. Instead of commenting at length upon metrical peculiarities, I have rather chosen to avail myself of the collection of examples made by Professor Corson, in his *Primer of English Verse,* and to refer from the respective lines to my reprint from his book, permission to use which was freely accorded. Obligations to other works than those already mentioned are for the most part duly recorded in their proper places.

As to the text, I have deliberately departed from the inconsistent usage with respect to the weak past participle which has prevailed from the first edition to the present. Hitherto, *ed*, *'d*, and *t* have been employed, upon a plan which may possibly have meant something to its inventor,

but which is not in accord with any recognized phonetic principle, and which presents to the eye only a confused mixture of conventional regularity (*ed*), Landorian reform spellings (*t*), and eighteenth century modishness (*'d*). Thus, in the first sixty-five lines of the poem, as well in the definitive edition of the *Works* published by Macmillan as in the first edition of *The Princess* (which of course omits *besieged* — *drown'd*, inclusive), I find: *flock'd* — phonetics would require *flockt; show'd; carved; cursed* — phonetically *curst; dived; mixt* — phonetically on a plane with *cursed* and *flock'd; arm'd; besieged; shunn'd; seem'd; whelm'd; push'd* — why not *pusht?* one might ask; *drown'd; murmur'd; moved; rear'd; danced; fired.* Perhaps it may be assumed (*assum'd?*) that the poet was responsible for these, and therefore they should be left untouched (*untouch'd? untoucht?*); but I cannot feel that they add either beautiful or characteristic touches to the poetry as such, and it is hardly worth while to perpetuate them as a monument either of Tennyson's or the printer's confusion or negligence. Hence I have had no scruples in writing uniformly *ed*, except where standard usage requires *t*. The *tho'* and *thro'* of the current editions have been retained. Here and there I have changed the punctuation, when it seemed that the sense would be more clearly brought out.

For definition I have frequently been indebted to the *Standard Dictionary*, sometimes with and sometimes without specific acknowledgment. The art of definition is a peculiarly difficult one; and it is a pleasure to record my belief that the *Standard Dictionary* is in this particular unexcelled among English works of its class. Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*

has been freely drawn upon for the illustration of ancient proper names.

My views on the teaching of *The Princess* are indicated in the Introduction, under the head, Suggestions to Students. In schools where this poem is 'read,' and not 'studied,' the apparatus provided can easily be ignored or slighted; but, personally, I could wish that literature deemed worthy of designation by a National Committee for use in the schools should likewise be deemed worthy of something more than a hurried perusal — should bear to be dwelt on; should, indeed, so fascinate by its charms and virtues as irresistibly to compel a more intimate acquaintance on the part of the student.

MONTVILLE, NEW JERSEY,
August 30, 1897.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	xi
SUGGESTIONS TO STUDENTS	xi
CRITICAL COMMENTS	xiv
TENNYSON'S LETTER ON THE PRINCESS	xxxvi
ILLUSTRATIONS OF METRICAL PECULIARITY	xl
THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY	1
PROLOGUE	1
PART I.	17
" II.	36
" III.	66
" IV.	86
" V.	116
" VI.	143
" VII.	161
CONCLUSION	181

INTRODUCTION.

I. SUGGESTIONS TO STUDENTS.

All study is a quest of something. One seeks, in order to find. Before undertaking the study of *The Princess*, therefore, it is only proper to inquire toward what objects this quest may most profitably be directed. Considering the nature of the poem — for it is in this that the answer is to be sought — we find that *The Princess* abounds in beauty, and that its object is to set forth and illustrate a truth or truths of which the poet is profoundly convinced. This being conceded, it follows that, while opinions are likely to vary concerning the degree or amount of beauty and of truth attained, it is improbable that any one who has qualified himself by reflection to form a judgment on the matter will assert that the poet has compassed both absolute beauty and absolute truth. In other words, we must hold ourselves prepared, however we may at first sight be dazzled by the many and varied excellences of the poem, to recognize in it the presence of more or less imperfection.

From what has been said it follows that our quest in the study of *The Princess* is threefold. Stating the objects in the order of their importance relatively to this particular poem, we accordingly have:

I. A QUEST OF BEAUTY.
II. A QUEST OF TRUTH.
III. A QUEST OF IMPERFECTION.

In order that the true character of the third quest, the quest of imperfection, may not be misapprehended, we must remind ourselves that, in poetry, what we have here named the quest of im-

perfection might as properly be called the endeavor to educate oneself up to higher and higher standards of judgment. In the course of the following pages Churton Collins and Bayard Taylor — the latter himself a poet — do not hesitate to criticize certain indications of inferiority which the poem here and there affords. It will not on this account be inferred that these scholarly students of literature are less sensitive than the generality of readers to the beauty and truth with which the poem is replete; it ought rather to be concluded — provided their criticisms, after protracted and repeated study, prove to be just — that they perceive a higher beauty or a more absolute truth than those to which the poet has succeeded in giving perfect embodiment. Instead of being less sensitive to the presence or absence of high quality than the generality of readers, these lovers of literature are far more so; their ears are attuned to nobler melodies than can always be realized by even a poet of Tennyson's exquisite feeling for the music of verse; and a presentation which fully satisfies the ordinary person may to them seem in some respects inadequate or faulty. Hence, if at a first reading we are repelled by the insinuation that Tennyson is open to the reproach conveyed in the following paragraph from Shairp's *Aspects of Poetry* (pp. 133, 134), we must not immediately condemn the writer for a failure to perceive so much of loveliness and noble thought as the poem contains, but rather endeavor to elevate ourselves, by the help of Tennyson and all other true poets, to a plane where we can perceive the element of rightness, be it greater or smaller, which the criticism embodies. Professor Shairp says:

'"A dressy literature, an exaggerated literature, seem to be fated to us. These are our curses, as other times had theirs." With these words Mr. Bagehot closes his essay to which I have alluded. No doubt the multitude of uneducated and half-educated readers, which every day increases, loves a highly ornamented, not to say a meretricious, style, both in literature and in the arts; and if these demand it, writers and artists will be found to furnish it. There remains, therefore, to the most educated the task of counterworking this evil. With them it lies to elevate the thought, and to purify the taste, of less cultivated readers, and so to remedy

one of the evils incident to democracy. To high thinking and noble living the pure style is natural. But these things are severe, require moral bracing, minds which are not luxurious, and can endure hardness. Softness, luxuriousness, and moral limpness find their congenial element in excess of highly colored ornamentation.'

Can you love Tennyson, can you admire *The Princess*, and yet read without violent indignation a passage like the foregoing? Can you calmly and resolutely set yourself to the task of learning the reasons why the critic has indulged in such severity, and of correctly appraising the value of his judgment? Finally, if there be any justice in his view, can you come to recognize it, without ceasing to appreciate at their full worth all the beauty and truth which *The Princess* contains? If so, you will have exemplified at its best the quest of imperfection, and will have found that under this name you have really been pursuing the highest beauty and the highest truth; and that you have formed some conception, however insufficient, of what the attainment of perfection means, and of the infinite pains which are required for even a tolerable approximation to it in such an art as poetry.

But these matters are high and hard, and the quest of imperfection necessarily follows, rather than precedes, the quest of beauty and truth. To perceive, to take and give account of, and, above all, to enjoy the beauty and truth resident in a fine piece of literature, can any exercise of human faculty, short of the creative, surpass this? I except the creative, for surely the poet's act of conception, and much of the subsequent execution, — or any similar exercise of creative power, even if of lower degree, — must transcend the mere reception of impressions from the works thus created. But, neglecting this alone, what can vie with such apprehension, such laying hold upon, of a noble poem, for instance? We must never forget, for it is a truth of prime order, what Wordsworth has taught us:

> We live by admiration, hope, and love.

And surely the study of the best literature affords most ample scope for the cultivation of at least two out of these three emo-

tions or virtues, namely, admiration and love. To employ Tennyson's own words:

> We needs must love the highest when we see it.

If this be true, it only remains that we shall take the trouble to see what then we cannot help but admire and love. To this end, with some reference also to that loftier, more ultimate, because more comprehensive search for imperfection, the comments in this book have been framed or brought together. There is no virtue for the student in the comments, apart from the quest for beauty and truth. To learn the notes, to look up references, is the sheerest waste of time and energy, unless the effort be guided and hallowed by this lofty aim, looking to such pure and intense enjoyment as will quicken all the faculties of the soul, and give a sort of divine zest to all endeavor.

II. CRITICAL COMMENTS.

[F. W. ROBERTSON, *Lectures and Addresses*, pp. 154-5.]

I placed Tennyson in the first order. And this not from any bigoted blindness to his deficiencies and faults, which are many, nor from any Quixotic desire to compare him with the very highest; but because, if the division be a true one which separates poets into the men of genuine passion and men of skill, it is impossible to hesitate in which Tennyson is to be placed. I ranked him with the first order, because with great mastery over his material, words, great plastic power of versification, and a rare gift of harmony, he has also Vision or Insight; and because, feeling intensely the great questions of his day, not as a mere man of letters, but as a man, he is to some extent the interpreter of his age, not only in its mysticism, which I tried to show you is the necessary reaction from the rigid formulas of science and the earthliness of an age of work, into the vagueness which belongs to infinitude, but also in his poetic and almost prophetic solution of some of its great questions.

Thus, in his *Princess*, which he calls a 'medley,' the former half of which is sportive, and the plot almost too fantastic and impos-

sible for criticism, while the latter portion seems too serious for a story so slight and flimsy, he has with exquisite taste disposed of the question which has its burlesque and comic as well as its tragic side, of woman's present place and future destinies. And if any one wishes to see this subject treated with a masterly and delicate hand, in protest alike against the theories which would make her as the man, which she could only be by becoming masculine, not manly, and those which would have her to remain the toy, or the slave, or the slight thing of sentimental and frivolous accomplishment which education has hitherto aimed at making her, I would recommend him to study the last few pages of *The Princess*, where the poet brings the question back, as a poet should, to nature; develops the ideal out of the actual woman, and reads out of what she is, on the one hand what her Creator intended her to be, and on the other, what she never can nor ought to be.

[STEDMAN, *Victorian Poets*, pp. 164–7.]

There comes a time in the life of every aspiring artist when, if he be a painter, he tires of painting cabinet pictures, — however much they satisfy his admirers; if a poet, he says to himself: 'Enough of lyrics and idyls; let me essay a masterpiece, a sustained production, that shall bear to my former work the relation which an opera or oratorio bears to a composer's sonatas and canzonets.' It may be that some feeling of this kind impelled Tennyson to write *The Princess*, the theme and story of which are both his own invention. At that time he had not learned the truth of Emerson's maxim that 'Tradition supplies a better fable than any invention can'; and that it is as well for a poet to borrow from history or romance a tale made ready to his hands, and which his genius must transfigure. The poem is, as he entitled it, 'A Medley,' constructed of ancient and modern materials, — a show of mediæval pomp and movement, observed through an atmosphere of latter-day thought and emotion; so varying, withal, in the scenes and language of its successive parts, that one may well conceive it to be told by the group of thoroughbred men and maidens who, one after another, rehearse its cantos to beguile a

festive summer's day. I do not sympathize with the criticisms to which it has been subjected upon this score, and which is but the old outcry of the French classicists against Victor Hugo and the romance school. The poet, in his prelude, anticipates every stricture, and to me the anachronisms and impossibilities of the story seem not only lawful, but attractive. Like those of Shakespeare's comedies, they invite the reader off-hand to a purely ideal world; he seats himself upon an English lawn, as upon a Persian enchanted carpet, — hears the mystic word pronounced, and, presto! finds himself in fairyland. Moreover, Tennyson's special gift of reducing incongruous details to a common structure and tone is fully illustrated in a poem made

> To suit with time and place,
> A Gothic ruin and a Grecian house,
> A talk of college and of ladies' rights,
> A feudal knight in silken masquerade.
>
> . . . . .
>
> This *were* a medley! we should have him back
> Who told the 'Winter's Tale' to do it for us.

But not often has a lovelier story been recited. After the idyllic introduction, the body of the poem is composed in a semi-heroic verse. Other works of our poet are greater, but none is so fascinating as this romantic tale: English throughout, yet combining the England of Cœur de Leon with that of Victoria in one bewitching picture. Some of the author's most delicately musical lines — 'jewels five words long' — are herein contained, and the ending of each canto is an effective piece of art.

The tournament scene, at the close of the fifth book, is the most vehement and rapid passage to be found in the whole range of Tennyson's poetry. By an approach to the Homeric swiftness, it presents a contrast to the laborious and faulty movement of much of his narrative verse. The songs, added in the second edition of this poem, reach the high-water mark of lyrical composition. Few will deny that, taken together, the five melodies: 'As through the land,' 'Sweet and low,' 'The splendor falls on castle walls,' 'Home they brought her warrior dead,' and 'Ask me no more!' — that these constitute the finest group of songs produced in our century;

and the third, known as the 'Bugle Song,' seems to many the most perfect English lyric since the time of Shakespeare. In *The Princess* we also find Tennyson's most successful studies upon the model of the Theocritan isometric verse. He was the first to enrich our poetry with this class of melodies, for the burlesque pastorals of the eighteenth century need not be considered. Not one of the blank-verse songs in his Arthurian epic equals in structure or feeling the 'Tears, idle tears,' and 'O swallow, swallow, flying, flying south!' Again, what witchery of landscape and action, what fair women and brave men, who, if they be somewhat stagy and traditional, at least are more sharply defined than the actors in our poet's other romances! Besides, *The Princess* has a distinct purpose, — the illustration of woman's struggles, aspirations, and proper sphere; and the conclusion is one wherewith the instincts of cultured people are so thoroughly in accord, that some are used to answer, when asked to present their view of the 'woman question,' 'You will find it at the close of *The Princess*.' Those who disagree with Tennyson's presentation acknowledge that if it be not true it is well told. His Ida is, in truth, a beautiful and heroic figure: —

> She bowed as if to veil a noble tear.
> . . . . . .
> Not peace she looked, the Head; but rising up
> Robed in the long night of her deep hair, so
> To the open window moved. . . . .
> . . . She stretched her arms and called
> Across the tumult, and the tumult fell.

Of the author's shortcomings in this and other poems we have to speak hereafter. I leave *The Princess*, deeming it the most varied and interesting of his works with respect to freshness and invention. All mankind love a story-teller such as Tennyson, by this creation, proved himself to be.

[TRAILL, in *Nineteenth Century* XXV. 765–6.]

Let his sympathy once be touched, and at once the stream of humor flows bright and free. How sweetly, for instance, it ripples through the poem of *The Princess!* Do you not feel as you listen

to its placid murmur that already, well-nigh fifty years ago, this poet had penetrated to the heart of that great Woman Question which is agitating so many humorless minds at the present day, and that he has reached it by the aid of the only guide that knows the way to it, — by the power of humorous sympathy? Critics more than one have spoken disparagingly of *The Princess*, and its technical faults of construction are obvious enough. But, if the design and fashioning of the work leave something to be desired, its fabric, — a warp of the sweetest poetry shot with a woof of the kindliest satire, — is of unsurpassable charm. The poem is instinct throughout with the poet's profound tenderness for the pathetic side of modern feminine aspirations and unrest, yet also alive throughout with his keen sense of the underlying comedy of it all. Let those who undervalue this exquisite piece of work consider how its subject would have fared in the hands of any one who simply brought to it a humor unsoftened by sympathy or a sympathy unchastened by humor. Let them endeavor to imagine the sour epigrams of the one and the sickly gush of the other, and they may then, perhaps, better appreciate the qualities which make *The Princess* what it is. For my own part, I confess to finding it, if not one of the poetically greatest, yet the most humanly complete of all the poet's works. I know no other, at any rate, which shows so many facets of his genius or gives anything like so adequate an idea of that rich matrix of natural temperament from which the precious ore was won.

[SAINTSBURY, *History of Nineteenth Century Literature*, pp. 261–2.]

The Princess is undoubtedly Tennyson's greatest effort, if not exactly in comedy, in a vein verging towards the comic — a side on which he was not so well equipped for offense or for defense as on the other. But it is a masterpiece. Exquisite as its author's verse always is, it was never more exquisite than here, whether in blank verse or in the (superadded) lyrics, while none of his deliberately arranged plays contains characters half so good as those of the Princess herself, of Lady Blanche and Lady Psyche, of Cyril, of the two Kings, and even of one or two others. And that unequaled dream-faculty of his, which has been more than once

glanced at, enabled him to carry off whatever was fantastical in the conception with almost unparalleled felicity. It may or may not be agreed that the question of the equality of the sexes is one of the distinguishing questions of this century; and some of those who would give it that position may or not maintain, if they think it worth while, that it is treated here too lightly, while their opponents may wish that it had been treated more lightly still. But this very difference will point the unbiased critic to the same conclusion, that Tennyson has hit the golden mean; while that, whatever he has hit or missed in subject, the verse of his essay is golden, no one who is competent will doubt. Such lyrics as 'The splendor falls,' and 'Tears, idle tears,' such blank verse as that of the closing passage, would raise to the topmost heights of poetry whatever subject it was spent upon.

[ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM, *Remains in Verse and Prose*, pp. 440–1.[1]]

We have remarked five distinct excellencies of his own manner. First, his luxuriance of imagination, and, at the same time, his control over it. Secondly, his power of embodying himself in ideal characters, or, rather, moods of character, with such extreme accuracy of adjustment that the circumstances of the narration seem to have a natural correspondence with the predominant feeling, and, as it were, to be evolved from it by assimilative force. Thirdly, his vivid, picturesque delineation of objects and the peculiar skill with which he holds all of them *fused*, to borrow a metaphor from science, in a medium of strong emotion. Fourthly, the variety of his lyrical measures and exquisite modulation of harmonious words and cadences to the swell and fall of the feelings expressed. Fifthly, the elevated habits of thought, implied in these compositions, and imparting a mellow soberness of tone, more impressive to our minds than if the author had drawn up a set of opinions in verse and sought to instruct the understanding, rather than to communicate the love of beauty to the heart.

[[1] From a review of Tennyson's poems published in the *Englishman's Magazine*, 1831.]

[J. CHURTON COLLINS, *Illustrations of Tennyson*, pp. 2–12, 176–8.]

Without going so far as Harpax in *Albumazar*, when he says —

> This poet is that poet's plagiary,
> And he a third's till they all end in Homer —

it is still interesting and necessary to remember that there have appeared in all literatures, at a certain point in their development, a class of poets who are essentially imitative and reflective. They have usually been men possessed of great natural ability, extensive culture, refined taste, wide and minute acquaintance with the literature which preceded them; they have occasionally been men endowed with some of the most precious attributes of original genius. The poets of Alexandria, the epic, lyric, and elegiac poets of Rome, are the most striking types of this class in ancient times. Tasso, Gray, and Tennyson are, perhaps, the most striking types in the modern world. In point of diction and expression, and regarded in relation to the mere material on which he works, Milton would also be included in this class of poets. But he is separated from them by the quality of his genius and his essential originality. What he borrows is not simply modified or adapted, but assimilated and transformed. In the poets who have been referred to, with the occasional exception of Virgil, what is borrowed undergoes, as a rule, no such transformation. They may be compared indeed to skilful horticulturists. They naturalize exotics. A flower which is the beauty of one region they transplant to another; and they call art to the assistance of nature. If a blossom be single they double it; if its hue be lovely it is rendered more lovely still. The work of such poets has a twofold value: it has — to borrow an expression from the schools — not only an exoteric but an esoteric interest. To sit down, for instance, to the study of the *Eclogues*, the *Georgics*, and the *Æneid*, without being familiar with the illustrative masterpieces of Greek poetry and the fragments of the older Roman literature, would be like traveling through a country, rich with historical traditions and splendid with poetical associations, without possessing any sense

of either. The uncritical spectator might be satisfied with the sensuous glory of the scenery, the simple loveliness of cloud and landscape, and the thousand effects of contrast and perspective; but an enlightened man would feel something very like contempt for one who, with the Ilissus and the Mincio whispering at his feet, was sensible only of the natural beauties of the landscape round him. Nature has indeed made one world, Art another. Lord Tennyson has now, by general consent, taken his place among English classics; he, too, will have, like Virgil and Horace, like Tasso and Gray, his critics and his commentators; and, unless I am much mistaken, one of the most important and useful departments of their labor will be that of tracing his obligations to his predecessors, of illustrating his wondrous assimilative skill, his tact, his taste, his learning. John de Peyrarède once observed that he knew no task more instructive than to compare Virgil's adaptations of Homer with the original passages — to note what details he rejected, what he added, what he softened down, what he thought proper to heighten. It was a perpetual study of the principles of good taste. . . .

Tennyson, then, belongs to a class of poets whose work has a twofold value and interest — a value and interest, that is to say, dependent on its obvious, simple, and intrinsic beauties, which is its exoteric and popular side, and a value and interest dependent on niceties of adaptation, allusion, and expression, which is its esoteric and critical side. To a certain point only he is the poet of the multitude; preëminently is he the poet of the cultured. Nor, I repeat, will his services to art be ever understood and justly appreciated till his writings come to be studied in detail; till they are, as those of his masters have been, submitted to the ordeal of the minutest critical investigation; till the delicate mechanism of his diction shall be analyzed as scholars analyze the kindred subtleties of Sophocles and Virgil; till the sources of his poems have been laid bare and the original and the copy placed side by side; till we are in possession of comparative commentaries on his poems as exhaustive as those with which Orelli illustrated Horace, and Eichhoff Virgil. His poems must be studied not as we study those of the fathers of song — as we study those of Homer,

Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare — but as we study those who stand first in the second rank of poets. In dealing with him we have not to deal with a Homer, but with an Apollonius, not with an Alcæus, but with a Horace — not, that is to say, with a poet of great original genius, but with an accomplished artist, with one whose mastery lies in assimilative skill, whose most successful works are not direct studies from simple nature, but studies from nature interpreted by art. He belongs, in a word, to a school which stands in the same relation to the literature of England as the Alexandrian poets stood to the literature of Greece, and as the Augustan poets stood to the literature of Rome.

To illustrate what has been said. In the works of the fathers of poetry everything is drawn directly from Nature. Their characters are the characters of real life. The incidents they describe are, as a rule, such incidents as have their counterpart in human experience. When they paint inanimate objects, either simply in detail or comprehensively in groups, their pictures are transcripts of what they have with their own eyes beheld. In description for the mere sake of description they seldom indulge. The physical universe is with them merely the stage on which the tragicomedy of life is evolving itself. Their language is as a rule plain, simple, impassioned. When they are obscure the obscurity arises not from affectation but from necessity. Little solicitous about the niceties of conception and expression, they are almost free from what the Greeks called κροκυλεγμός (dealing in trifles) and ψυχρότης (ambitious conceits). Their object was to describe and interpret, not to refine and subtilize. They were great artists not because they worked consciously on critical principles but because they communed with truth. They were true to Art because they were true to Nature.

In the school of which we may take Virgil and Tennyson to be the most conspicuous representatives, a school which seldom fails to make its appearance in every literature at a certain point of its development, all this is reversed. Their material is derived not from the world of Nature, but from the world of Art. The hint, the framework, the method of their most characteristic compositions seldom or never emanate from themselves. . . .

Both delight in substituting subtle suggestiveness for simplicity and directness of expression. . . . If Tennyson would describe the flight of scared deer it is —

> Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail (*The Brook*);

or a gesture of surprise, it is —

> Up went the hushed amaze of hand and eye (*Princess*).

So again perfectly commonplace things are presented in a euphuism which borders on the ludicrous. But here between Virgil and Tennyson resemblance ceases. Virgil has never gone further in this stilted euphuism than 'dona laboratæ cereris' for loaves, or 'Eliadum palmas equarum' for mares who win the prize at Elis. His delicate good taste would have preserved him from such extravagances as

> the knightly growth that fringed his lips (*Passing of Arthur*)

for a moustache, or

> azure pillars of the hearth (*Princess*)

for ascending smoke, or

> ambrosial orbs (*Isabel*)

for apples.

In truth this peculiarity of Tennyson's diction is much more in the style of Lycophron and Nonnus, or in the style of the Précieuses of the Hôtel Rambouillet than on the model of Virgil. Equally un-Virgilian and Nonnic are the stilted periphrases affected in so many of Tennyson's blank verse poems, notably *The Princess* and the *Idylls*. . . . Instances of these peculiarities in the style of Nonnus and Tennyson (they are characteristic of all literatures in their decadence, and have been severely commented on by Longinus) might be extended indefinitely. . . .

How far the immense extent of Lord Tennyson's indebtedness to his predecessors in various languages may be judged to detract from his claim to originality, is a question with which I have no concern. Many analogies and parallels no doubt resolve themselves into mere coincidences; many are examples of those poetic commonplaces which must necessarily abound wherever poetry

finds voluminous expression; but the greater part of them as obviously represent the material on which he has worked as the Homeric parodies in the *Æneid* indicate their originals. . . .

But I should not like it to be supposed that, because I have instituted a comparison between Lord Tennyson and Virgil, I have assumed that they stand on the same level. The distance which separates the author of *In Memoriam* and the *Idylls of the King* from the author of the *Georgics* and the *Æneid* is almost as considerable as the distance which separates all other poets now living from the author of *In Memoriam*. It measures indeed the difference between a great classic whose power and charm will be felt in all ages, and in all regions coëxtensive with civilized humanity, and a poet who will be a classic intelligible to those only who speak his language and think his thoughts. In tone and temper Lord Tennyson is, to borrow an expression of M. Taine, the most insular of eminent English poets, as he is assuredly the most conventional. And it is this which explains the extraordinary fascination which for nearly half a century he has exercised over his countrymen. A gift of felicitous and musical expression which it would be no exaggeration to describe as marvelous, an instinctive sympathy with what is best and most elevated in the sphere of the commonplace — of commonplace thought, of commonplace sentiment and activity — with corresponding representative power, a most rare faculty of seizing and fixing in very perfect form what is commonly so inexpressible because so impalpable and evanescent in emotion and impression, and a power of catching and rendering the charm of Nature, of meadow, wood, and mountain, of sky and stream, of tree and flower, with a fidelity and vividness which resembles magic, and lastly, unrivaled skill in choosing, repolishing, and resetting the gems which are our common inheritance from the past: in these gifts is to be found the secret of his eminence. And these gifts will suffice for immortality.

[CHARLES KINGSLEY, in *Fraser's Magazine* XLII (1850) 250–1.]

The idyllic manner alternates with the satiric, the pathetic, even the sublime, by such imperceptible gradations, and continual delicate variations of key, that the harmonious medley of his style

becomes the fit outward expression of the bizarre and yet harmonious fairyland in which his fancy ranges. In this work, too, Mr. Tennyson shows himself more than ever the poet of the day. In it more than ever the old is interpenetrated with the new — the domestic and scientific with the ideal and sentimental. He dares, in every page, to make use of modern words and notions, from which the mingled clumsiness and archaism of his compeers shrinks as unpoetical. Though . . . his stage is an ideal fairyland, yet he has reached the ideal by the only true method, — by bringing the Middle Age forward to the present one, and not by ignoring the present to fall back on a cold and galvanized mediævalism; and thus he makes his 'Medley' a mirror of the nineteenth century, possessed of its own new art and science, its own new temptations and aspirations, and yet grounded on, and continually striving to reproduce, the forms and experiences of all past time. The idea, too, of *The Princess* is an essentially modern one. In every age women have been tempted, by the possession of superior beauty, intellect, or strength of will, to deny their own womanhood, and attempt to stand alone as men, whether on the ground of political intrigue, ascetic saintship, or philosophic pride. Cleopatra and St. Hedwiga, Madame de Staël and the Princess, are merely different manifestations of the same self-willed and proud longing of woman to unsex herself, and realize, single and self-sustained, some distorted and partial notion of her own as to what the 'angelic life' should be. Cleopatra acted out the pagan ideal of an angel; St. Hedwiga, the mediæval one; Madame de Staël hers, with the peculiar notions of her time as to what '*spirituel*' might mean; and in *The Princess* Mr. Tennyson has embodied the ideal of that nobler, wider, purer, yet equally fallacious, because equally unnatural analogue, which we may meet too often up and down England now. He shows us the woman, when she takes her stand on the false masculine ground of intellect, working out her own moral punishment, by destroying in herself the tender heart of flesh; not even her vast purposes of philanthropy can preserve her, for they are built up, not on the womanhood which God has given her, but on her own self-will; they change, they fall, they become inconsistent, even as she does herself, till at last

she loses all feminine sensibility; scornfully and stupidly she rejects and misunderstands the heart of man; and then, falling from pride to sternness, from sternness to sheer inhumanity, she punishes sisterly love as a crime, robs the mother of her child, and becomes all but a vengeful fury, with all the peculiar faults of woman, and none of the peculiar excellences of man.

The poem being, as its title imports, a medley of jest and earnest, allows a metrical license of which we are often tempted to wish that its author had not availed himself; yet the most unmetrical and apparently careless passages flow with a grace, a lightness, a colloquial ease and frolic, which perhaps only heighten the effect of the serious parts, and serve as a foil to set off the unrivaled finish and melody of these latter. In these come out all Mr. Tennyson's instinctive choice of tone, his mastery of language, which always fits the right word to the right thing, and that word always the simplest one, and the perfect ear for melody which makes it superfluous to set to music poetry which, read by the veriest schoolboy, makes music of itself. . . .

How Mr. Tennyson can have attained the prodigal fulness of thought and imagery which distinguishes this poem, and especially the last canto, without his style ever becoming overloaded, seldom even confused, is perhaps one of the greatest marvels of the whole production. The songs themselves, which have been inserted between the cantos in the last edition [1] of the book, seem, perfect as they are, wasted and smothered among the surrounding fertility, — till we discover that they stand there, not merely for the sake of their intrinsic beauty, but serve to call back the reader's mind, at every pause in the tale of the Princess' folly, to that very healthy ideal of womanhood which she has spurned.

At the end of the first canto, fresh from the description of the female college, with its professoresses, and hostleresses, and other Utopian monsters, we turn the page, and —

> As thro' the land at eve we went,
> And plucked the ripened ears,
> We fell out, my wife and I,
> And kissed again with tears.

[[1] The third edition (1850).]

And blessings on the falling-out
  That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love,
  And kiss again with tears.

For when we came where lies the child
  We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
  We kissed again with tears.

[WALTERS, *Tennyson*, pp. 63-68.]

The Princess is particularly important to the student, affording him as it does an insight into Tennyson's peculiar, but not erratic, ideas of woman. 'She is the second, not the first.' No one reverenced more than he the daughters and mothers of the race. But at the same time no one was more strongly convinced than he that women must not be allowed to usurp the privileges of men.

When the man wants weight, the woman takes it up,
And topples down the scales; but this is fixed
As are the roots of earth and base of all:
Man for the field and woman for the hearth;
Man for the sword and for the needle she;
Man with the head and woman with the heart;
Man to command and woman to obey;
All else confusion.

In his early poems he had given us a series of skillfully drawn pictures of women of many types of beauty, pictures upon which we could gaze with delight, but the prototypes of which we do not yearn to know. But in *The Princess* he sets before us woman as she is, declares what she should aspire to, indicates her duty, informs us of her limits.

The bearing and the training of a child
Is woman's wisdom.

Tennyson once admitted half regretfully that 'the public did not see that the child was the heroine' of the poem, not Princess Ida. The fate of Psyche's babe is the pivot upon which the whole story

revolves. It is Psyche's babe who teaches Ida that she has a woman's heart, and such influence as a child may exercise, when all other influences fail, is revealed in the song beginning 'Home they brought her warrior dead.' Women are not to be hard and inexorable, are not to despise the love of worthy men, are not, indeed, to trust to themselves in their journeying along life's rough by-ways. They must yield themselves to the stronger, trust themselves to the wiser, find support and protection in the enfolding arms of the mightier. Woman's part is 'sweet humility.' Her 'cause is man's: they rise or sink together.' . . .

The Princess was a protest against the rhapsodical falsity of such views as Shelley held. It showed woman her proper sphere, it forbade presumption and lawlessness, it silenced foolish discontent which had its origin in mistaken purposes, and it corrected the tendency of 'advanced' womanhood to direct her aims to unprofitable and unappropriate ends. Tennyson's argument is that if woman be the lesser man she must be content with a lesser sphere and an inferior place — yet not with a sphere or place without dignity. She is not to be the drudge and slave, she is not to be 'something better than a dog, a little dearer than the horse,' but a being with a soul, a being 'dipped in angel instincts,' a being to whom man may be 'yoked in all exercise of noble end.'

Tennyson has been greatly misunderstood upon this subject, especially by those who cannot discriminate between the false and true ideals of womanhood. As well treat women as playthings as treat them as divinities. We have to choose between the extravagant and impossible and the natural and practical. An ideal is none the worse for being attainable. The dissolute lyrists of the seventeenth century sang of women as goddesses and treated them like slaves. Tennyson takes a perfectly human view of the sex; and perhaps in comparison with the views of many of his predecessors his opinions seem commonplace, lacking in warmth and enthusiasm. He has even been deemed to hold women in contempt: Mr. Salt, with his mind fixed on Shelleyian ideals, thinks that *The Princess*, as a contribution to the discussion of female education, is 'sadly trivial and commonplace, being the merest caricature of the ideas it is supposed to combat, and a repetition

of the immemorial fallacies by which men seek to divert attention from the real issue, culminating, of course, in the hypocritically evasive injunction, "Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust to me."' The poet's aim, as I conceive it, was to avoid in this, as in other questions, the falsehood of extremes. He perceived the true office of woman, and plainly indicated where her duty lay and where her powers could be best directed. A more glorious-seeming but utterly impossible ideal would have won for him unstinted praise, but what was Tennyson if not a plain dealer? He abhorred woman's wrongs without subscribing fully to the modern programme of woman's rights. He had the candor to combat some of her claims and the courage to deny some of her pretensions. Less as a matter of principle than as a matter of propriety and expediency he showed where the impulsive Ida would fail. All men know and all women realize that there are inevitable limitations to the progress of the weaker sex in certain directions, and if the boundary line is overstepped, it is at the risk of losing certain womanly attributes and leaving certain womanly functions unfulfilled. It is not those who talk most fulsomely of women's destiny who treat women most kindly. Laon is seldom just to Cythna; but Ida was not the sport of a wanton or the slave of a libertine. Tennyson's love was pure and unimpassioned; his type and ideal of the good and perfect woman was an Edith Aylmer, a gentle Enid, a Lilia Vivian, and a Dora. These were gracious, tender, loving, the best to love and the best to wed — models of English wives and mothers who remain unexcelled. Those who have gazed long upon the gaudy foliage of the tropics may at length fail to appreciate the delicate perfection of a pale pink rose; and those who have been accustomed to the resplendent beauty and the ardors of Zuleika, Parisina, Cythna, Zelica, Haidée, and the other damsels ravishing as the houri and as remote as they from human nature, will be dissatisfied with a simple Letty meeting her lover by the lake, or with Maud who sends her swain a rose. Tennyson's women are a protest against the Oriental creatures who are deemed fit for a sultan's harem, and who, the early poets of the century would have us believe, exceed in charms and character our own English maids. But reaction has set

in, and most of us are now prepared to echo the song of the Foresters :

There is no land like England
  Where'er the light of day be;
There are no wives like English wives
  So fair and chaste as they be.
There is no land like England
  Where'er the light of day be;
There are no maids like English maids
  So beautiful as they be.

Let us remember also with gratitude and admiration that Tennyson was a woman's champion. He sought not only to save them from themselves by correcting distorted aims and subduing ambition that was akin to rebellion against law and their ordained lot; but he strove most earnestly to protect them from the awful wrongs of a corrupt age. How often was his voice raised against loveless marriages and against marriage forbidden when true love was inspired! No more terrible sermon against the paltry pride that would sacrifice happiness to selfish, seeking ambition is to be found than in *Aylmer's Field*, where the fury of the poet is so great that he spares not the parents who have broken the heart of their child, but makes them pay a penalty heavier than death. . . . So firm a believer was Tennyson in holy marriage that he could tell of the happiness of the leper's wife; he cherished women so much, felt so deeply for them in their feebleness, that he could rouse pity for the Magdalene;[1] he hated so fiercely the cruelty of man that he did not scruple to defend the faithless wife of a vexing and loveless husband;[2] and with all the burning scorn of a noble nature he denounced the iniquity of forcing a pure maiden to wed a rich and unscrupulous creditor of her needy father.[3] Such a poet could have no debased and unworthy ideas of women; and, even if his heroines may half contemptuously be classed as 'quiet and domestic,' they are sweet and pure, faithful and true, and perfect in beauty because perfect in honor and virtue. As

[1] See *Forlorn* in the *Demeter* volume.
[2] See *The Wreck* in the *Tiresias* volume.
[3] See *The Flight*.

time goes on and the new light increases, it will be found that Tennyson's doctrines will bear the strongest of all tests. As in other matters, he spoke the plain and honest truth of women, their mission, and their future, heedless alike of praise and blame, but serenely confident of ultimate justification.

[BAYARD TAYLOR, *Critical Essays*, pp. 14–19.]

Tennyson's power of receiving strong and multiform impressions cannot be doubted; but one who possesses so consciously the rarest qualities of his art, and so deliberately devotes his life to the perfection thereof, is exposed to a danger which he can never entirely recognize, and thus overcome. The artistic sense, so constantly and exquisitely refined, acquires an insidious mastery over the free idea, and partly conceals it under the very perfection of illustration which is meant to present it in its full proportions. That higher sense which determines the relative value of such illustrations becomes dulled; each asserts its equal right, and receives equal attention, so it carry a tempting epithet with it; and the reader is constantly hurried back and forth, to and from the theme of the poem, by metaphors and descriptions so bright, keen, and true, that each must be separately enjoyed. We do not walk as in a path, towards some shining peak in the distance; but as over a lush meadow, where new, enchanting blossoms, to the right and left, entice our steps hither and thither. A poetical conception requires perspective, balance of tints, concentration of the highest light, no less than a picture; where, from beginning to end, every detail is presented with equal prominence and elaborated with equal skill, there is no resting-place for the mind, as, in a similar picture, there is none for the eye. I do not mean that this is a pervading fault of Tennyson; his instinct is too true to allow it to vitiate his most earnest work; but his methods of labor do not allow him wholly to escape it. There are few forms of knowledge which he has neglected, and few which he has not used in the service of poetry. He rarely mistakes through deficient perception, but very frequently through correct perception asserting itself without regard to its proper place and value. All objects present themselves to him with such distinctness of illustration

that he forgets the unfamiliarity of the reader with their qualities. . . . The poem [*The Princess*], in fact, abounds with instances where the expression as a whole is weakened and confused by the author's tendency to make each particular complete, without reference to its relation to others.

[DAWSON, *A Study* (1st ed.), pp. 54–57.]

The poem of *The Princess*, as a work of art, is the most complete and satisfying of all Tennyson's works. It possesses a play of fancy, of humor, of pathos, and of passion which give it variety; while the feeling of unity is unbroken throughout. It is full of passages of the rarest beauty and most exquisite workmanship. The songs it contains are unsurpassed in English literature. The diction is drawn from the treasure-house of old English poetry, — from Chaucer, from Shakespeare and the poets of the Elizabethan age. The versification is remarkable for its variety; while the rhythm, in stateliness and expression, is modeled upon Milton. There are passages which, in power over language to match sound with sense, are not excelled by anything in *Paradise Lost* for strength, or in Milton's minor poems for sweetness. The poem abounds also in evidences of the prophetic insight which has already been referred to as the mark of a true poet. In the year 1847, long before Darwin had commenced the present great revolution in scientific thought, evolutionary theories were propounded by the poet in the imaginary halls of his female university. Huxley himself could not have sketched more vividly than the Lady Psyche the progressive development of the world from the primal cosmic vapor. The Princess, with the accuracy taught only recently by the spectroscope, calls the sun 'a nebulous star.' When she gets her mind off the brooch, she becomes really profound in her analysis of our notions of creation as stages of successive acts. Our minds, she teaches, are so constituted that we must *of necessity* apprehend everything in the form and aspect of successive time; but, in the Almighty fiat, '*Let there be light*,' the whole of the complex potentialities of the universe were in fact hidden.

Not only is the poem satisfying in these respects. It breathes throughout that faith and hope in the future which make Tennyson the poet of a progressive age. For many excellent persons this universe is moribund. They can take pleasure in thinking that the Creator, once more foiled, is on the eve of angrily breaking up this world and beginning it all over again. Such is not the philosophy of our poet. He speaks in his own person in the epilogue. He says:

> For me the genial day, the happy crowd,
> The sport half-science, fill me with a faith.
> This fine old world of ours is but a child
> Yet in the go-cart. Patience! Give it time
> To learn its limbs; *there is a hand that guides.*

This faith runs through all his works — nor is it anywhere more beautifully expressed than in his very latest volume, in the second and third stanzas of *The Children's Hospital.*

Still the poem of *The Princess* is not an exhaustive solution of the question treated. All men cannot or do not marry. Millions of women pass unwedded through life. In many cases the sweetness of their nature overflows in general usefulness to others, in some cases it sours with disappointment. Millions of women have gone to dishonored graves — 'even God's providence seeming estranged' — victims to an artificial state of society. Here are questions for more favored ones to consider of profounder import than sunflowers or china pigs. Of what avail is mere knowledge before these profound social and moral problems? The ultimate outcome of all knowledge is mystery. The sources of being are hidden behind an impenetrable veil. We juggle with words and play with them as children with counters, getting out of them such meanings only as we ourselves first put in. The intellect is finite, but the affections are infinite. We know in part, and we prophesy in part. Our prophecies shall fail and our knowledge vanish in a clearer dawn, but *Love*, of which woman is the priestess, abideth forever.

[DIXON, *Tennyson Primer*, pp. 133–140.]

The latter-day poets assure us, and the latter-day critics likewise, that art is all in all, that poetry is style. We have critics not a few who regard sweetness and strength as attributes of style, and are ignorant that they are not attributes of style, but attributes of mind and character, expressed in style. How fortunate that in Tennyson the balance was preserved — the balance between the emotions and the will, between the heart and head, between what is said and the manner of saying it! Because Tennyson's style is the expression of character, and not a palace of emptiness, because he is throughout sane and everywhere guided by a wise knowledge of the poet's craft, he is a true and great artist. To compare him with his successors is to gauge the true measure of his performance. With his successors the balance is lost, and when a man or a poet has nothing to say, to think that it can be said finely, what hallucination! To think that the accent of freshness can be obtained by torturing language, that the great effects in poetry, the effects of Sophocles, of Dante, and of Shakespeare, their intense significance, can be accounted for by a skill in words, an artisan's dexterity! The great effects in poetry are straightforward effects; the great effects of poetry are those in which the emphasis of expression corresponds to some emphasis of thought, some intensity of feeling. And it is because in Tennyson the artist rarely outran the man that we have confidence in him. If you ask me for the secret of Tennyson's hold upon the mind of his generation, I shall answer you with assurance that it lies in his accent of sincerity, it lies in his literary integrity, in a wholesomeness in his art. For this integrity we value him, and for this the future will value him. The poetry that cannot make for beauty and grace and harmony in human life, since it has practically no bearing upon life at all, such poetry is as vain a thing as the jargon of the critics who commend it, and as transitory.

As the poetic artist of the nineteenth century who best knew his own limitations, and in whom the balance, the compromise between form and matter, in which poetry consists, is best pre-

served, as poetic chronicler of the mental life of his time, and as the interpreter of that spirit of intellectual hesitation which was characteristic of his contemporaries and leads to eclecticism in matters of faith, Tennyson will be remembered. And he will be remembered, although the greatness of his work must be looked for elsewhere than in its scope or imaginative power. The large comprehensiveness, the wide-eyed vision that takes in the spectacle of human life in its vast whole and in the complexity of its parts, this did not belong to him, nor did he share in all the joys and sorrows of mankind. . . .

To the color-school of English poetry, to the lineage of the poets of romance, Tennyson belonged. He did not care to draw in outline, to impress by the naked grandeur of conception. From the first, like Keats, he held that poetry should surprise by a fine excess, by a richness and profusion of beauties, that it should be a veritable cloth of gold. From the first he was for such accessories as should lead the senses captive, and enthrall the reader with infinite vistas of delight. Yet his is not the bewildering charm of Spenser's fairyland, the luxuriant undergrowth of beauty in enchanted forests. Rather it is the ordered beauty of a noble English garden, of the English landscape that he loved so well. It was said by Wordsworth of Tennyson: 'He is not much in sympathy with what I should myself most value in my attempts — viz., the spirituality with which I have endeavored to view the material universe, and the moral relations under which I have wished to exhibit its most ordinary appearances.' It is true that Tennyson was not much in sympathy with such attempts. Few poets indeed have kept with Nature a closer companionship; her sights and sounds were his most familiar friends. To this close companionship we owe the skilful appropriateness of his backgrounds, and the delicate accuracy of their form and color. Tennyson observed, and observed narrowly; observed indeed with something akin to the trained scientific eye. There is no need to adduce from his poetry passages to prove how loving and how close an eye he kept upon the world around him. . . . But for all this Wordsworth was right. Tennyson did not, in the same degree as Wordsworth, 'see into

the life of things,' and when the elder poet's imagination would have kindled into the flame of unquenchable poesy, Tennyson remained a draughtsman and a colorist, but the draughtsman and colorist who is perhaps the greatest of English idyllic poets. . . .

You will seek in vain in Tennyson for the larger elements, the far horizons of thought, the wide and gracious spaces, the unimagined depths, the austere yet tranquilizing sadness, the severe unbroken calm, the magnanimities of the greatest poetry. You will seek in vain for the presence of the higher imagination. The popular verdict will not have it so. It will affirm that none of the qualities of the highest poetry are absent from Tennyson's verse. But for those acquainted, however slightly, with the literature of the world's past, passage after passage will rise to mind, passage after passage beside which there is nothing of Tennyson's to be placed.

III. TENNYSON'S LETTER ON THE PRINCESS.

[*This letter, 'the most important and interesting ever written by Tennyson in connection with his poetry,' was written to Mr. S. E. Dawson, after the appearance of his excellent Study.*]

ALDWORTH, HASLEMERE,
SURREY, Nov. 21st, 1882.

DEAR SIR :

I thank you for your able and thoughtful essay on *The Princess*. You have seen, amongst other things, that if women ever were to play such freaks, the burlesque and the tragic might go hand in hand.

I may tell you that the songs were not an afterthought. Before the first edition came out I deliberated with myself whether I should put songs in between the separate divisions of the poem; again, I thought, the poem will explain itself ; but the public did not see that the child, as you say, was the heroine of the piece, and at last I conquered my laziness and inserted them. You would be still more certain that the child was the true heroine if, instead of the first song as it now stands,

As thro' the land at eve we went,

I had printed the first song which I wrote, 'The losing of the child.' The child is sitting on the bank of a river, and playing with flowers; a flood comes down; a dam has been broken through; the child is borne down by the flood; the whole village distracted; after a time the flood has subsided; the child is thrown safe and sound again upon the bank, and all the women are in raptures. I quite forget the words of the ballad, but I think I may have it somewhere.

Your explanatory notes are very much to the purpose, and I do not object to your finding parallelisms. They must always recur. A man (a Chinese scholar) some time ago wrote to me, saying that in an unknown, untranslated Chinese poem there were two whole lines of mine, almost word for word. Why not? Are not human eyes all over the world looking at the same objects, and must there not consequently be coincidences of thought and impressions and expressions? It is scarcely possible for any one to say or write anything in this late time of the world to which, in the rest of the literature of the world, a parallel could not somewhere be found. But when you say that this passage or that was suggested by Wordsworth or Shelley or another, I demur, and more, I wholly disagree. There was a period in my life when, as an artist — Turner, for instance — takes rough sketches of landskip, etc.. in order to work them eventually into some great picture, so I was in the habit of chronicling, in four or five words or more, whatever might strike me as picturesque in nature. I never put these down, and many and many a line has gone away on the north wind, but some remain, *e.g.*:

A full sea glazed with muffled moonlight.[1]

Suggestion: The sea one night at Torquay, when Torquay was the most lovely sea-village in England, tho' now a smoky town. The sky was covered with thin vapor, and the moon was behind it.

A great black cloud
Drag inward from the deep.[2]

Suggestion: A coming storm seen from the top of Snowdon.

[[1] *Princess* I. 244.]
[[2] *Princess* VII. 21–22, not quite accurately.]

In the *Idylls of the King:*

with all
Its stormy crests that smote against the skies.[1]

Suggestion: A storm which came upon us in the middle of the North Sea.

As the water-lily starts and slides.[2]

Suggestion: Water-lilies in my own pond, seen on a gusty day with my own eyes. They did start and slide in the sudden puffs of wind, till caught and stayed by the tether of their own stalks — quite as *true* as Wordsworth's simile, and more in detail.

A wild wind shook —
Follow, follow, thou shalt win.

Suggestion: I was walking in the New Forest. A wind did arise, and

Shake the songs, the whispers, and the shrieks
Of the wild wood together.[3]

The wind, I believe, was a west wind, but, because I wished the Prince to go south, I turned the wind to the south, and naturally the wind said, 'Follow.' I believe the resemblance which you note is just a chance one. Shelley's lines are not familiar to me, tho', of course, if they occur in the *Prometheus*, I must have read them.

I could multiply instances, but I will not bore you; and far indeed am I from asserting that books, as well as nature, are not, and ought not to be, suggestive to the poet. I am sure that I myself, and many others, find a peculiar charm in those passages of such great masters as Virgil or Milton where they adopt the creation of a bygone poet, and reclothe it, more or less, according to their own fancy. But there is, I fear, a prosaic set growing up among us, editors of booklets, bookworms, index-hunters, or men of great memories and no imagination, who *impute them-*

[1 *Lancelot and Elaine* 483, with 'smote' for 'smoke.']
[2 *Princess* IV. 236.]
[3 *Princess* I. 96–99, not quite accurately.]

selves to the poet, and so believe that *he*, too, has no imagination, but is for ever poking his nose between the pages of some old volume in order to see what he can appropriate. They will not allow one to say 'Ring the bells,' without finding that we have taken it from Sir P. Sydney — or even to use such a simple expression as the ocean 'roars' without finding out the precise verse in Homer or Horace from which we have plagiarized it (fact !).

I have known an old fish-wife, who had lost two sons at sea, clench her fist at the advancing tide on a stormy day and cry out: 'Ay ! roar, do ! how I hates to see thee show thy white teeth !' Now if I had adopted her exclamation and put it into the mouth of some old woman in one of my poems, I dare say the critics would have thought it original enough, but would most likely have advised me to go to Nature for my old women, and not to my own imagination; and indeed it is a strong figure.

Here is another little anecdote about suggestion. When I was about twenty or twenty-one I went on a tour to the Pyrenees, Lying among these mountains before a waterfall that comes down one thousand or twelve hundred feet, I sketched it (according to my custom then) in these words:

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn.[1]

When I printed this a critic informed me that 'lawn' was the material used in theatres to imitate a waterfall, and graciously added: 'Mr. T. should not go to the boards of a theatre, but to Nature herself, for his suggestions.' And I *had* gone to Nature herself. I think it is a moot point whether, if I had known how that effect was produced on the stage, I should have ventured to publish the line.

I find that I have written, quite contrary to my custom, a letter, when I had merely intended to thank you for your interesting commentary.

Thanking you again for it, I beg you to believe me

Very faithfully yours,

A. TENNYSON.

[[1] *The Lotos-Eaters* 11.]

P.S. — By the bye, you are wrong about 'the tremulous isles of light';[1] they are 'isles of light,' spots of sunshine coming through the leaves, and seeming to slide from one to the other, as the procession of girls 'moves under *shade*.' And surely the 'beard-blown' goat[2] involves a sense of the wind blowing the beard on the height of the ruined pillar.

IV. ILLUSTRATIONS OF METRICAL PECULIARITY.

[CORSON, *Primer of English Verse*, pp. 56–63.]

Some of the best examples are found in Tennyson's 'Princess' and 'Idylls of the King.' Every ripple in his verse, caused by a shifting of the accent, or by additional unaccented syllables, imparts a motived logical or emotional emphasis. Such emphasis is often increased by an accompanying organic alliteration. Various other interesting metrical effects are exhibited in the following examples.

> *Brake with* a *b*last of trumpets from the gate.

> while the twangling violin
> *Struck up* with Soldier-lad*die*, *and o*verhead,

The abrupt vowels and final abrupt consonants of the initial words, 'Struck up,' aid the effect.

> *Petulant* she spoke, and at herself she laughed;

The abrupt vowel and consonant in 'Pet-' aid the effect of the initial *axx*.

> he started on his feet,
> *Tore the* King's letter, snowe*d* it *d*own, and ren*t*
> The wonder of the loom thro' *w*arp and *w*oof
> From *sk*irt to *sk*irt;

> but 'No!'
> *Roared the r*ough King, 'you shall not; we ourself
> Will crush her pretty maiden fancies *d*ea*d*
> In iron gauntlets; brea*k* the *c*ouncil u*p*.'

[1 *Princess* VI. 65.] [2 *Princess* IV. 60.]

We rode
Many a *l*ong *l*eague back *to the North.* At last

There stood a bust of Pallas for a sign,
By two sphere lamps *blazoned* like Heaven and Earth
*With con*stellation and *with con*tinent,
Above an entry;

*D*rink *d*eep, until the habits of the slave,
The sins of emptiness, *gossip* and spite
And slander, die.

She ended here, and beckoned us; the rest
Parted; and, glowing full-faced welcome, she
Began to address us, and was moving on
In gratulation, till as when a boat
Tacks, and the slackened sail *flaps, all* her voice
Faltering and flut*tering in* her throat, she cried,
My brother.

I would be that for ever which I seem,
Woman, if I might sit beside your feet,

elegies
And quoted odes, and jewels five-words-long
That on the stretched forefinger of all Time
Sparkle for ever;

An extra effect is imparted to the effect of the *ax* foot, 'Sparkle,' by the additional light syllable '-er' of 'ever,' before the break.

I learnt more from her in a flash,
Than if my brainpan were an empty hull,
And every Muse *tumbled* a science in.

The abrupt word 'in' receiving the ictus, adds to the effect of the *ax* foot, 'tumbled.'

once or twice I thought to roar
To br*eak* my ch*ain*, to sh*ake* my m*ane*; but thou,
Modulate me, soul of *m*incing *mim*icry!

While the great organ almost burst his pipes,
Groaning for power, and ro*ll*ing thro' the court
A *l*ong me*l*odious thunder to the *s*ound
Of *s*olemn p*s*alms, and *s*ilver *l*itanies,

There while we stood beside the fount, and watched
Or seemed to watch the danc*ing bubble*, approached
Melissa.

Here the exceptional foot is an *xax*.

And up we came to where the river sloped
To plunge in cat*aract, shattering on b*lack *b*locks
A *b*readth of thunder.

we wound
About the cliffs, the copses, out and in,
Hammering and clinking, chat*tering sto*ny names
Of shale and hornblend, rag and trap and tuff,
Amygdaloid and trachyte, *till the Sun*
Grew broader toward his death and fell, and all
The rosy heights came out above the lawns.

Note with what beauty the italicized verses come in after the 'stony names.'

Then she 'Let some one sing to us ; *lightli*er *m*ove
The *m*inutes fledged with *m*usic ;'

So sweet a *v*oice and *v*ague, *fatal* to men,

Not vassals to be beat, nor pretty babes
*To be dan*dled, no, but living wills, and sphered
Whole in ourselves and owed to none.

hoof by hoof,
And every hoof a knell to my desires,
Clanged on the bridge ;

For blind with rage she missed the plank, and rolled
*In the riv*er. Out I sprang from *gl*ow to *gl*oom ;
There *whirl*ed her *wh*ite *r*obe *l*ike a *b*lossomed *b*ranch
Rapt to the hor*rible fall ;* a glance I gave,
No more; but woman-vested as I was,

Plunged; and the flood drew; yet I caught her; then
Oaring one arm, and bearing in my left
The weight of all the hopes of half the world,
Strove to buffet to land in vain.

The metrical effects of this passage are especially notable. Note effect of the *xxa* foot, 'In the riv-,' coming in without a pause, after the prolongable word 'rolled'; the alliterations in the third verse; the initial *ax* feet of the fourth, sixth, and seventh verses; the very effective *xxa* foot, '-rible fall,' in the fourth verse; the suggestion of struggle in the two *ax* feet of the last verse.

A little space was left between the horns,
Thro' which I clambered o'er at top with pain,
Dropped on the sward, and *up* the linden walks,

Note, too, the effect of the abrupt words, 'Dropped' and 'up.'

I heard the *p*uffed *p*ursuer; at mine ear
Bubbled the nightingale and heeded not,
And *s*ecre*t* *l*augh*t*er *t*ick*l*ed a*ll* my *s*ou*l*.

above her drooped a lamp,
And made the single jewel on her *b*row
Burn like the mystic fire on a mast-head,
Prophet of storm.

and close behind her stood
Eight daughters of the plough, *stronger* than men,

As of some fire against a stormy cloud,
When the wild peasant rights himself, the rick
Flames, and his anger reddens in the heavens;

her breast,
Beaten with some great passion at her heart,
Palpitated, her hand shook, and we heard
In the dead hush the papers that she held
Rustle;
they to and fro
Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some red, some pale,

and the wild birds on the light
*Dash them*selves *d*ea*d*.

Or, falling, protomartyr of our cause,
Die;

She, ending, waved her hands; thereat the crowd
Muttering, dissolved;

While I listened, came
*On a sud*den the weird seizure and the doubt;

Breathing and sounding *b*eauteous *b*attle, comes
*With the air of the trum*pet round him, and leaps *in*
Among the women, snares them by the score,
Flattered and *fl*ustered, wins, tho' *d*ashed with *d*eath
He reddens what he kisses;

but other thoughts than Peace
Burnt in us, when we saw the embattled squares,
And squadrons of the Prince, *trampling* the flowers
With clamor; for among them rose a cry
As if to greet the King; they made a halt;
The horses yelled; they clashed their arms; the drum
*Beat; merrily-blow*ing shrilled the martial fife;
And in the blast and bray of the long horn
And serpent-throated bugle, undulat*ed*
The bann*er*; anon to meet us lightly pranced
Three captains out;

and standing like a stately Pine
Set in a cataract on an island-crag,
When storm is on the heights, and right and left
Sucked from the dark heart of the long hills roll
The torrents, dashed *to the vale;*

till a rout of saucy boys
Brake on us at our books, and marred our peace,
Masked like our maids, *blustering* I know not what
Of insolence and love.

yet whatsoe'er you do,
Fight and fight well; *strike and* strike home. O dear
Brothers, the woman's Angel guards you,

and once more
The trumpet, and again ; at which the storm
Of gal*loping hoofs* bare on the ridge of spears
And riders front to front,

The large blows rained, as here and everywhere
He rode the mellay, lord *of the ring*ing lists,
And all the plain, — brand, mace, and *sh*aft, and *sh*ield —
Shocked, like an iron-clanging anvil banged
With hammers;

came
As comes a pillar of electric cloud,
Flaying the roofs and sucking up the drains,
And shad*owing down* the champaign till it strikes
On a wood, and takes, and breaks, and cracks, and splits,
And twists the grain with such a roar that Earth
Reels, and the herdsmen cry;

by them went
The enamored air sighing, and on their curls
From the high tree the blossom wavering fell,
And over them the trem*ulous isles* of light
Slided, they moving under shade;

Thro' open field into the lists they wound
Timorously;

Steps with a tender foot, *light as* on air,

Up started from my side
The old lion, glaring with his whelpless eye,
Silent;

and when she saw
The haggard father's face, and reverend beard
Of grisly twine, all dabbled with the blood
Of his own son, *shuddered*, a twitch of pain
Tortured her mouth,

to them the doors gave way
Groaning,

And on they moved and gained the hall, and there
Rested;

she said
*Broken*ly, that she knew it, she had failed
In sweet humility;

The two-celled heart *beating*, with one full stroke,
Life.

The *ax* foot, 'beating,' gains additional effect from the monosyllabic words before and after it. The same is true of the preceding *ax* foot.

the walls
Blackened about us, *b*ats wheeled and owls whooped.

THE PRINCESS:

A MEDLEY.

PROLOGUE.

SIR WALTER VIVIAN all a summer's day
Gave his broad lawns until the set of sun
Up to the people; thither flocked at noon
His tenants, wife and child, and thither half

1. **Sir Walter Vivian.** 'The prototype of Sir Walter Vivian was Edmund Henry Lushington, and his son, "an Edmund too" (to retain the idea and change the name), became the husband of Cecilia Tennyson, whose marriage is the theme of the concluding stanzas of *In Memoriam*. The poet's tribute to his brother-in-law, "the most learned man in England after Thirlwall," will be immediately recalled:

> And thou art worthy, full of power;
> As gentle, liberal-minded, great,
> Consistent; wearing all that weight
> Of learning lightly like a flower.'

(Walters, *Tennyson*, p. 63.)

It has been said that Sir John Simeon, of Swainston, in the Isle of Wight, was the original of Sir Walter Vivian, but this view is not so well supported. See the description in Con. 41 ff., and the note there.

2. **Lawns.** Glades or open spaces among or between woods; natural pasture-land. The American lawn is not to be thought of. Cf. **sloping pasture,** 55.

The neighboring borough with their Institute, 5
Of which he was the patron. I was there
From college, visiting the son — the son
A Walter too — with others of our set,
Five others: we were seven at Vivian Place.

And me that morning Walter showed the house, 10
Greek, set with busts; from vases in the hall
Flowers of all heavens, and lovelier than their names,
Grew side by side; and on the pavement lay
Carved stones of the Abbey-ruin in the park,
Huge Ammonites, and the first bones of Time; 15
And on the tables every clime and age
Jumbled together: celts and calumets,
Claymore and snowshoe, toys in lava, fans
Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,

5. **Institute.** Mechanics' Institute. What would this be?

8. **A Walter too.** See note on 1.

9. **Seven.** How many cantos are there of the story proper?

11. **Greek.** What are some of the characteristics of this style of domestic architecture? Designate a house of this style in your vicinity, and describe the exterior. When did this style become common in England?

12. **Lovelier than their names.** Explain.

15. **Ammonites.** Fossil shells, usually ornamented outside with ribs, knobs, spines, etc., while the under layer is pearly. There is a fossil mollusk called *cornu Ammonis*, the horn of the god Ammon, who was represented with a ram's head; hence the name. — **First bones of Time.** Have you ever seen any in a museum?

17. **Jumbled.** Prefiguring the 'medley.' — **Celts.** Prehistoric weapons of stone or bronze, somewhat resembling a chisel or an axe. — **Calumets.** Indian tobacco-pipes with stone bowl, and long reed stem ornamented with eagles' feathers.

18. **Claymore.** A heavy two-handed and double-edged broadsword, used by the Scottish Highlanders.

19. **Amber.** What is its color? What are sometimes found embedded in it? What is its connection with the discovery of electricity? — **Rosaries.** Describe.

Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere, 20
The cursed Malayan crease, and battle-clubs
From the isles of palm ; and higher on the walls,
Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk and deer,
His own forefathers' arms and armor hung.

And 'This,' he said, 'was Hugh's at Agincourt; 25
And that was old Sir Ralph's at Ascalon :
A good knight he ! We keep a chronicle
With all about him' — which he brought, and I
Dived in a hoard of tales that dealt with knights,
Half-legend, half-historic, counts and kings 30
Who laid about them at their wills and died;
And, mixed with these, a lady, one that armed
Her own fair head, and sallying thro' the gate,
Had beat her foes with slaughter from her walls.

20. A series of ivory balls of various sizes, one inside another, or carved with extreme delicacy and elaborate design by the Chinese and Burmese. Notice the music of the lines, as dependent upon the preponderance of vowels and following liquids; then the rounder, bolder *o*'s, followed by the thinner *e*'s. Is the *o* of *ivory* as much stressed as that of *laborious* and *orient* — is there not a weakening of the sound before it passes over into *e?* How is this paralleled by the succession of balls? Is this a chance effect or a studied one? In this respect does it suggest the artistry of the balls themselves? See if you discover anything else in the poem like this wonderful artistry.

21. **Crease.** A dagger or short sword, generally with a waved blade and oblique handle. See a picture under the spelling *Kris* in the *Standard Dictionary*. Why 'cursed'? What sort of a wound would the blade make?

25. **And 'This.'** An easy transition. — **Agincourt.** Have you ever read Shakespeare's *Henry V.?* If not, you can there gain a new pleasure, and at the same time learn of the Battle of Agincourt (1415).

26. **Ascalon.** Here Richard Cœur-de-Lion won a victory over the Saracens of Saladin (1192).

'O miracle of women,' said the book, 35
'O noble heart who, being strait-besieged
By this wild king to force her to his wish,
Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunned a soldier's death,
But now when all was lost, or seemed as lost —
Her stature more than mortal in the burst 40
Of sunrise, her arm lifted, eyes on fire —
Brake with a blast of trumpets from the gate,
And, falling on them like a thunderbolt,
She trampled some beneath her horses' heels,
And some were whelmed with missiles of the wall, 45
And some were pushed with lances from the rock,
And part were drowned within the whirling brook:
O miracle of noble womanhood!'

35–49. Not in the first edition. Probably added to foreshadow the more heroic parts of the story proper.

36. Strait-besieged. Closely beset by an army.

38. Cf. V. 170.

39. Cf. VI. 6.

40. More than mortal. So Bedivere, in the *Morte d'Arthur*, looked

Larger than human on the frozen hills.

Cf. *Paradise Lost* IV. 985–8; *In Memoriam* LXXXVII. 37; but especially *Princess* IV. 469 ff.; V. 336 ff.

42. Note the shattering sounds, and study how they are produced. Is this, perhaps, the reason why the poet substitutes **brake** for the **broke** of 38? Listen to the rending in *Sir Galahad:*

The splintered spear-shafts crack and fly.

See p. **xl.**

44–46. Some . . . some . . . some. Suppose, instead of *And some*, the poet had written *Others*, would the effect have been better? Cf. II. 56–58; IV. 284–8; VII. 91–97.

47. And part. Why not *And some?* — **The whirling brook.** Cf. IV. 160 ff.

48. Reverts to 35, but with a fine sonorous close.

So sang the gallant glorious chronicle;
And, I all rapt in this, 'Come out,' he said, 50
'To the Abbey; there is Aunt Elizabeth,
And sister Lilia with the rest.' We went
(I kept the book and had my finger in it)
Down thro' the park; strange was the sight to me;
For all the sloping pasture murmured, sown 55
With happy faces and with holiday.
There moved the multitude, a thousand heads:
The patient leaders of their Institute
Taught them with facts. One reared a font of stone
And drew, from butts of water on the slope, 60
The fountain of the moment, playing, now
A twisted snake, and now a rain of pearls,
Or steep-up spout whereon the gilded ball
Danced like a wisp; and somewhat lower down
A man with knobs and wires and vials fired 65
A cannon; Echo answered in her sleep
From hollow fields; and here were telescopes
For azure views; and there a group of girls
In circle waited, whom the electric shock
Dislinked with shrieks and laughter; round the lake 70
A little clock-work steamer paddling plied,

50. An abrupt transition. From what century to what? From what state of society to what?

51. **To the Abbey.** Suppose the poet had conducted us at once to the Abbey, l. 91, would the intermixture of epochs and moods, the medley, have been so complete?

55. **Pasture murmured.** Cf. IV. 416.

56. A hendiadys. Will your *Rhetoric* help you to explain this word? There is another instance in VI. 80.

59. **Taught them with facts.** The poet's irony, one suspects, for he used to say, as reported by Knowles: 'Poetry is a great deal truer than fact.'

63. **Steep-up.** Try to substitute a good synonym for this.

64. **Wisp.** Will-o'-the-wisp.

And shook the lilies: perched about the knolls
A dozen angry models jetted steam;
A petty railway ran; a fire-balloon
Rose gem-like up before the dusky groves 75
And dropped a fairy parachute, and passed:
And there thro' twenty posts of telegraph
They flashed a saucy message to and fro
Between the mimic stations; so that sport
Went hand in hand with science; otherwhere 80
Pure sport; a herd of boys with clamor bowled
And stumped the wicket; babies rolled about
Like tumbled fruit in grass; and men and maids
Arranged a country dance, and flew thro' light
And shadow, while the twangling violin 85
Struck up with 'Soldier-laddie,' and overhead
The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty lime
Made noise with bees and breeze from end to end.

Strange was the sight, and smacking of the time;
And long we gazed, but satiated at length 90
Came to the ruins. High-arched and ivy-clasped,

80. **Otherwhere.** Cf. VI. 357.

82. **Stumped.** Playing cricket. How is cricket played?

85–86. See p. xl.

86. **'Soldier-laddie.'** A Scotch song.

87. Note how the account of the scientific diversions, whose prosaic character the poet has been taxed to disguise, here passes over into poetry. Where did the prose stop and the poetry begin to reappear? — **Ambrosial.** A Homeric word, meaning 'divine'; here, divinely fragrant. Cf. IV. 6.

In this line and the next mark the *b* (*r*), *l*, and vowel alliterations; the liquids; and the resonant *z*'s: ambro*s*ial, noi*s*e, bee*s*, free*z*e. Cf. VII. 207.

90. Do not give the long sound to the second *a* of **satiated**; the English do not.

Of finest Gothic lighter than a fire,
Thro' one wide chasm of time and frost they gave
The park, the crowd, the house; but all within
The sward was trim as any garden lawn: 95
And here we lit on Aunt Elizabeth,
And Lilia with the rest, and lady friends
From neighbor seats; and there was Ralph himself,
A broken statue propped against the wall,
As gay as any. Lilia, wild with sport, 100
Half child half woman as she was, had wound
A scarf of orange around the stony helm,
And robed the shoulders in a rosy silk,
That made the old warrior from his ivied nook

92. Have you ever seen a picture of a ruined Gothic abbey? In what respects does Gothic differ from Greek architecture? What was the palmy period of Gothic? Does the introduction of the ruins add another element to the medley?

93. **Chasm of time and frost.** Explain. — **Gave.** Showed; a Gallicism. Cf. I. 226. Tennyson is fond of viewing a landscape in this way; thus in *Ulysses:*

> Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
> Gleams that untraveled world.

Is it Gothic or Greek architecture that Tennyson is describing in *The Palace of Art?*

> Likewise the deep-set windows, stained and traced,
> Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires
> From shadowed grots of arches interlaced,
> And tipped with frost-like spires.

94. **The park, the crowd, the house.** Are these above or below the site of the ruins?

95. **Lawn.** Of the same sort as in 2?

98. **Seats.** Country seats. — **Ralph.** See 26.

102. New elements of contrast, as again in 105: 'near his tomb a feast.'

104. What metrical peculiarity?

Glow like a sunbeam; near his tomb a feast 105
Shone, silver-set; about it lay the guests,
And there we joined them: then the maiden Aunt
Took this fair day for text, and from it preached
An universal culture for the crowd,
And all things great; but we, unworthier, told 110
Of college: he had climbed across the spikes,
And he had squeezed himself betwixt the bars,
And he had breathed the proctor's dogs; and one
Discussed his tutor, rough to common men,
But honeying at the whisper of a lord; 115
And one the Master, as a rogue in grain
Veneered with sanctimonious theory.

But while they talked, above their heads I saw
The feudal warrior lady-clad; which brought

105. The picnic lunch of *Audley Court* is described at much greater length (Bayard Taylor criticizes this in his essay on Tennyson). Why is it so briefly touched upon here?

106. **Silver-set.** 'A fact nobody cares at all to know' (Bayard Taylor, *Critical Essays*, p. 17). Cf. IV. 17.

109. A preparation for the collegiate life of the poem; cf. 111 ff.

111. **He.** Like Lat. *ille*.

113. **Breathed the proctor's dogs.** 'Tired out in the chase the proctor's assistants who pursue students to arrest them, and are called in college slang "bull-dogs." The proctor is a subordinate officer of college discipline' (Woodberry).

115. **Honeying.** Becoming sweet or bland; a peculiar Tennysonian use.

116. **Master.** President of a college in an English university.—**Grain.** Innate character. 'The word "grain" has had a curious history, which is given at length by Marsh (*Lectures on the English Language* III.); from having originally signified a seed or kernel from which a peculiarly rich and strong dye was procured, it has come to be commonly used in modern parlance to denote the fibre or texture of any substance' (Wallace).

118. **Above their heads.** Is the statue standing on the ground?

119. **Lady-clad.** Meaning?

My book to mind; and opening this I read 120
Of old Sir Ralph a page or two that rang
With tilt and tourney; then the tale of her
That drove her foes with slaughter from her walls,
And much I praised her nobleness, and 'Where,'
Asked Walter, patting Lilia's head (she lay 125
Beside him), 'lives there such a woman now?'

Quick answered Lilia 'There are thousands now
Such women, but convention beats them down;
It is but bringing up; no more than that;
You men have done it; how I hate you all! 130
Ah, were I something great! I wish I were
Some mighty poetess, I would shame you then,
That love to keep us children! O I wish
That I were some great princess, I would build
Far off from men a college like a man's, 135
And I would teach them all that men are taught;
We are twice as quick!' And here she shook aside
The hand that played the patron with her curls.

And one said smiling 'Pretty were the sight
If our old halls could change their sex, and flaunt 140
With prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans,

120. **My book.** Cf. 53.
121. **Old Sir Ralph.** Of what century?
123. Cf. 44 ff.
125. **Walter.** How related to Lilia?
128. **Convention.** General or tacit consent; conventionality. Cf. II. 72.
133. **Children.** Cf. I. 136, 140.
134. Another prefigurement.
138. **Played the patron with.** Patronizingly caressed.
139. **Pretty were the sight.** Cf. II. 2 ff., 414 ff., 448; IV. 456–460.
141–2. Alliteration.

And sweet girl-graduates in their golden hair.
I think they should not wear our rusty gowns,
But move as rich as Emperor-moths, or Ralph
Who shines so in the corner; yet I fear, 145
If there were many Lilias in the brood,
However deep you might embower the nest,
Some boy would spy it.'
At this upon the sward
She tapped her tiny silken-sandaled foot:
'That 's your light way; but I would make it death 150
For any male thing but to peep at us.'

Petulant she spoke, and at herself she laughed;
A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,
And sweet as English air could make her, she;
But Walter hailed a score of names upon her, 155
And 'petty Ogress,' and 'ungrateful Puss,'
And swore he longed at college — only longed,
All else was well — for she-society.
They boated and they cricketed; they talked
At wine, in clubs, of art, of politics; 160
They lost their weeks; they vext the souls of deans;

142. Memorize.

144. **Emperor-moths.** A picture in the *Standard Dictionary*. The prevailing colors are dark gray, brown, and reddish yellow, with blue spots. Cf. II. 5.

149. **Silken-sandaled.** Bayard Taylor criticizes this; see note on 105.

150. **Death.** Cf. II. 178.

152. See p. xl.

155. **Hailed.** Cf. I. 60; VI. 50.

156. **Ogress.** A female demon or monster that was supposed to devour human beings.

158. **She-society.** Cf. III. 147.

159 ff. See Wordsworth, *Prelude*, III. 248–257.

161. **Lost their weeks.** 'At an English University residence for a certain number of terms is necessary to render a student eligible

They rode; they betted; made a hundred friends,
And caught the blossom of the flying terms:
But missed the mignonette of Vivian-place,
The little hearth-flower Lilia. Thus he spoke, 165
Part banter, part affection.
'True,' she said,
'We doubt not that. O yes, you missed us much.
I 'll stake my ruby ring upon it you did.'

She held it out; and as a parrot turns
Up thro' gilt wires a crafty loving eye, 170
And takes a lady's finger with all care,
And bites it for true heart and not for harm,
So he with Lilia's. Daintily she shrieked
And wrung it. 'Doubt my word again!' he said.
'Come, listen! here is proof that you were missed: 175
We seven stayed at Christmas up to read;
And there we took one tutor as to read;
The hard-grained Muses of the cube and square

for his degree, and residence for a certain proportion of each term (reckoned by attendance at dinner) is necessary to enable him to "count" that term. The expression therefore denotes that they were irregular in their observance of the college regulations concerning attendance, and consequently were unable to count certain weeks of their residence towards their degrees' (Wallace).

163. What is meant?

165. **Hearth-flower.** Cf. V. 122.

170. **Gilt wires.** *The Day-Dream* 36:

The parrot in his gilded wires.

176. **Read.** Study; the English expression.

178. An elaborate periphrasis for mathematics. Not in the first edition, which reads:

We seven took one tutor. Never man.

The addition seems unnecessary, and exemplifies one of Tennyson's worst predilections — the bent for dressing up prose in a semblance

Were out of season; never man, I think,
So moldered in a sinecure as he; 180
For while our cloisters echoed frosty feet,
And our long walks were stripped as bare as brooms,
We did but talk you over, pledge you all
In wassail; often, like as many girls,
Sick for the hollies and the yews of home — 185
As many little trifling Lilias — played
Charades and riddles as at Christmas here,
And *What's my thought?* and *When and Where and How?*
And often told a tale from mouth to mouth,
As here at Christmas.'
She remembered that; 190
A pleasant game she thought; she liked it more
Than magic music, forfeits, all the rest.
But these — what kind of tales did men tell men,
She wondered, by themselves?

of poetry, when simplicity and rapidity would be more to the purpose. In such cases the effect becomes one of unrelieved, almost tinsel gaudiness, which deprives the intrinsically excellent parts of their due relief.

180. What was this sinecure?

181. Echoed frosty feet. Cf. *Morte d'Arthur:*

> The bare black cliff clanged round him, as he based
> His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
> Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels.

182. Walks. Avenues of trees.

184. Wassail. Drinking of healths. From OE. *wes hāl*, 'be whole,' 'be well,' where the *wes* is imperative, like *fare* in *farewell.* Cf. *The Epic* 5; *In Memoriam* CIV. 18.

185. On what occasion is holly most used? See *In Memoriam* XXIX. 9; XXX. 2.

192. Magic music. 'Some hidden article is sought for by one of the company, who is partly guided in his efforts by the music of some instrument which is played fast and loud as he approaches the place of concealment, and more slowly and softly as he wanders from it' (Wallace).

A half-disdain
Perched on the pouted blossom of her lips; 195
And Walter nodded at me: '*He* began,
The rest would follow, each in turn; and so
We forged a sevenfold story. Kind? what kind?
Chimeras, crotchets, Christmas solecisms,
Seven-headed monsters only made to kill 200
Time by the fire in winter.'
'Kill him now,
The tyrant! kill him in the summer too,'
Said Lilia; 'Why not now?' the maiden Aunt.
'Why not a summer's as a winter's tale?
A tale for summer as befits the time, 205
And something it should be to suit the place,
Heroic — for a hero lies beneath —
Grave, solemn!'
Walter warped his mouth at this
To something so mock-solemn, that I laughed,
And Lilia woke with sudden-shrilling mirth 210

195. **Blossom of her lips.** Cf. *Œnone* 76:

He pressed the blossom of his lips to mine.

Probably suggested by uses of the Greek ἄνθος, 'blossom,' 'flower.' Trace the resemblance in this metaphor.

199. **Chimeras.** Absurd creations of the imagination. Describe the Greek Chimæra. — **Crotchets.** Whimsical inventions. — **Solecisms.** 'This word is fancifully derived from the fact that the Athenian settlers at Soli, a town in Cilicia, lost the original purity of the Attic dialect. It thus denotes originally an impropriety in language, then, more loosely, any incongruity or inconsistency — here a ridiculous story' (Wallace).

In this line the poet anticipates and deprecates adverse criticism on the incongruities of his story.

204. **Winter's tale.** Cf. 231.

207–9. Cf. Con. 10–28.

210. **Sudden-shrilling.** Cf. *Madeline* 35; *Elaine* 327. — **Shrilling.** V. 241; VII. 31.

An echo like a ghostly woodpecker
Hid in the ruins; till the maiden Aunt
(A little sense of wrong had touched her face
With color) turned to me with 'As you will;
Heroic if you will, or what you will, 215
Or be yourself your hero if you will.'

'Take Lilia, then, for heroine,' clamored he,
'And make her some great Princess, six feet high,
Grand, epic, homicidal; and be you
The Prince to win her!'
'Then follow me, the Prince,' 220
I answered; 'each be hero in his turn!
Seven and yet one, like shadows in a dream.
Heroic seems our Princess as required;
But something made to suit with time and place,
A Gothic ruin and a Grecian house, 225
A talk of college and of ladies' rights,
A feudal knight in silken masquerade,
And, yonder, shrieks and strange experiments
For which the good Sir Ralph had burnt them all—
These *were* a medley! we should have him back 230

211. Bayard Taylor criticises **warped** and **sudden-shrilling**. He says: 'I italicize expressions which are simply unusual—original by force of will—not happy, nor agreeable. It is quite impossible to imagine laughter the echo of which sounds like a ghostly woodpecker!' In *Kate*, a poem of the volume of 1833, Tennyson had written: 'As laughters of the woodpecker.' The first four editions of *The Princess* have **April** instead of **ghostly**.

218. Six feet high. Compare what is said of Arac, V. 244–8, 264.

222. Dream. Again a way of deprecating criticism on improbabilities. The word appears twenty times as a noun in *The Princess*.

225–8. Cf. 11, 70, 92, 103, 127 ff.

229. Had burnt them all. Why?

230. Were. Parse.—**Medley.** What is the full title of the poem?

Who told the 'Winter's Tale' to do it for us.
No matter; we will say whatever comes.
And let the ladies sing us, if they will,
From time to time, some ballad or a song
To give us breathing-space.'
So I began, 235
And the rest followed; and the women sang
Between the rougher voices of the men,
Like linnets in the pauses of the wind;
And here I give the story and the songs.

231. Winter's Tale. Have you read it? Compare note on I. 134, the latter part.

233–8. Added in the third edition, with the six songs.

236. The women sang. 'The songs, like the little child, breathe of motherhood, wifehood, love; of that love which is the poet's best solution of the problem he undertook to solve' (Luce, *Handbook to Tennyson's Works*, p. 245).

238. In the pauses of the wind. *The Miller's Daughter* 122–3:

> And, in the pauses of the wind,
> Sometimes I heard you sing within.

But Shelley had already said (*Letter to Maria Gisborne*):

> The murmur of the awakening sea doth fill
> The empty pauses of the blast.

Hallam Tennyson says: 'It may be remarked that there is scarcely anything in the story which is not prophetically glanced at in the Prologue' (Wallace).

Compare the Prologue with the Conclusion, and try to form a judgment of why they were provided. Would not the story have been as acceptable without them? There must be *some* reason why the poet thought them necessary, for we have a fragment of his conversation reported in the *Nineteenth Century* (XXXIII. 173), by its editor, Knowles, to this effect: '"It is necessary to respect the limits," he said; "an artist is one who recognizes bounds to his work as a necessity, and does not overflow illimitably to all extent about a matter. I soon found that if I meant to make any mark at all it must be by shortness, for all the men before me had been

so diffuse, and all the big things had been done. To get the workmanship as nearly perfect as possible is the best chance for going down the stream of time. A small vessel on fine lines is likely to float farther than a great raft." '

He must have carefully considered everything, so far as was possible at the time, for we are told by Jennings (*Lord Tennyson*, p. 115): 'While the poem was passing through the press he subjected it to such minute revision that Mr. Moxon regarded him, says Miss Mitford, as "a great torment, keeping proofs a fortnight to alter, and then sending for revises." ' Was such careful workmanship of advantage to the poem? Cf. pp. xxii, xxxi.

I.

A PRINCE I was, blue-eyed, and fair in face,
Of temper amorous, as the first of May,
With lengths of yellow ringlet, like a girl,
For on my cradle shone the Northern star.

There lived an ancient legend in our house. 5
Some sorcerer, whom a far-off grandsire burnt
Because he cast no shadow, had foretold,
Dying, that none of all our blood should know
The shadow from the substance, and that one
Should come to fight with shadows and to fall. 10
For so, my mother said, the story ran.
And, truly, waking dreams were, more or less,
An old and strange affection of the house.
Myself too had weird seizures, Heaven knows what:

3. **Yellow ringlet.** Cf. 38.

4. Wallace says: 'This periphrasis is very characteristic of the poet's genius. The bald meaning is: "For I am a native of a northern country," but the form of the expression in the text, besides embodying an idea picturesque in itself, has also a distant reference to the old astrology, which taught that the various planets guided the fortunes of those who were born under their respective influences.'

6. **Burnt.** Cf. Prol. 229.

7. **Cast no shadow.** Like Peter Schlemihl, in Chamisso's tale.

14. **Weird seizures.** 'The "weird seizures," the "haunting sense of hollow shows," is a trait added to the character of the Prince in the edition of 1851. And the poet meant it to emphasize the part played by Nature in subduing the Princess; also to make the Prince less heroic, and to serve as an apology for his being so; to serve also as an apology for the character of the whole poem; and more especially to make the work of redemption set apart for the

On a sudden in the midst of men and day, 15
And while I walked and talked as heretofore,
I seemed to move among a world of ghosts,

Princess more important and more complete; for her is reserved the doubtful privilege of making a man of him. . . . In regard to these "weird seizures," . . . it is interesting to note that . . . the poet always speaks of them in contemptuous terms, as befits their dramatic position' (Luce, *Handbook*, p. 243).

On the other side, hear Woodberry (p. 133): 'The gain was considerable; the Prince was not a hero, but only a lover; and his character as a lover is not weakened, but rather strengthened, by ascribing to him the "affection of the house," especially as this is presented less as a physical disease than as the state of vision and faintness traditionally associated with the lovers of romance; his figure gathers both pathos and glamor, and evokes greater sympathy through the device; secondly, by this means an atmosphere of dreamland and unreality is diffused from time to time through the whole story, and relieves materially the weakness of the machinery of the narrative, which, taken too literally, is always in danger of becoming farcical and degenerating into *opera-bouffe* effects; thirdly, there is a continuous suggestion that the true illusion is the theory of life exemplified in the Princess and her school, and the true cure — the return to reality — is the love-match which makes the lovers whole in their united selves. Such indefinable suggestion as is indicated by these statements is of the essence of poetic art, and not less real because it escapes observation in detail. On the whole, the "weird seizures" seem to aid in realizing the temperament of the Prince, in giving definition to his vague life (for, so far as he is seen, he is without any true experience in action or thought — he has never done anything), and also in fusing the whole matter of the poem, and reducing its "medley" to a common tone of feeling.'

Dawson (*Study*, p. 49) disagrees with this. He says: 'These additions seem not only unnecessary and uncalled for, but are actually injurious to the unity of the work. They confuse the simple conception of his character, and graft on to his personality the foreign and somewhat derogatory idea of catalepsy; for in that light does the court doctor regard them. The poet must have had some definite object in inserting them. Can it be that they are to indicate the

And feel myself the shadow of a dream.
Our great court-Galen poised his gilt-head cane,
And pawed his beard, and muttered 'catalepsy.' 20
My mother, pitying, made a thousand prayers;
My mother was as mild as any saint,
Half-canonized by all that looked on her,
So gracious was her tact and tenderness;
But my good father thought a king a king; 25

weakness and incompleteness of the poet side of the Prince's character until he has found rest in his ideal? Then only can he say—

> My doubts are dead,
> My haunting sense of hollow shows; the change,
> This truthful change, in thee has killed it.

'The dreamy Prince, haunted by doubts and living in shadowland, by the healing influence of a happy love wakes up to the purpose and dignity of life. Such a change is perhaps not very uncommon. Unless a man be endowed with a strong animal nature, or be dominated by some selfish passion such as ambition or avarice, life is very apt to seem purposeless, and not worth the trouble of living. For such an unhealthy state of mind a worthy love is the sole remedy. Possibly some such meaning may have been in the mind of the author; but still we must resent the least imputation of catalepsy as inartistic and unnecessary.'

18. The shadow of a dream. In Greek literature life is often called a dream or a shadow, but Pindar, in his eighth Pythian ode, was the first to combine them in the phrase σκιᾶς ὄναρ ἄνθρωπος, — 'man is the dream of a shadow.' Tennyson's expression is Shakespearian (*Haml.* II. ii. 265): 'Dreams indeed are ambition, for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the *shadow of a dream*.' From Shakespeare it is adopted by Shelley, *Ode to Heaven*, and again in *Prince Athanase* I. 198; cf. *Epips.* 116, and Prol. 222.

19. Galen was a Greek physician (A.D. 130–200).

20. Catalepsy. A rare nervous condition, characterized by a sudden suspension of consciousness and obstinate muscular rigidity associated with plasticity, so that a limb remains in any attitude given it (*Standard Dictionary*).

22. Mother. See VII. 298–312.

25. Father. For other indications of his character see IV. 387–397; V. 144–160, 342–350, 428–456.

He cared not for the affection of the house;
He held his sceptre like a pedant's wand
To lash offense, and with long arms and hands
Reached out, and picked offenders from the mass
For judgment.
Now it chanced that I had been, 30
While life was yet in bud and blade, betrothed
To one, a neighboring Princess; she to me
Was proxy-wedded with a bootless calf
At eight years old; and still from time to time
Came murmurs of her beauty from the South, 35
And of her brethren, youths of puissance;
And still I wore her picture by my heart,

33. **Proxy-wedded with a bootless calf.** Rather, *espoused* to the proxy, or representative, of the Prince. Dawson says (p. 63): 'The Princess is sound in her law. She says, Book V. [388–9], that at the age of eight there could be no consent, and she had given none since. King Gama says there was a "kind of ceremony" [122–3], and the Prince even does not dare, in the presence of the Princess, to call it more than a "precontract" [III. 191].'

The ceremony is described in Bacon's *History of King Henry VII.*, the marriage there referred to being that of Maximilian of Austria with Anne of Brittany in 1489. The marriage by proxy was a public ceremony, where, as stated above, the imperial ambassador appeared as the proxy, or representative, of the groom, probably standing with the bride, and signing the marriage contract in the king's name.

In this case, as in the wedding of the Princess, the bride was not only publicly contracted, but a private ceremony followed, in which the ambassador was received by the bride in the presence of sundry noble personages, men and women, and with certain formal ceremonies, alluded to in Tennyson's line, acknowledged as the groom.

Charles Astor Bristed says (*Amer. Rev.* VIII (1848). 37): 'Where was the need of allusion or reference to this . . . custom of a dark age? You can't say it was introduced to preserve historical accuracy, for there is no historical or chronological keeping in the poem.'

35. Cf. IV. 411, 416.

36. **Youths of puissance.** Cf. V. 244–6.

And one dark tress; and all around them both
Sweet thoughts would swarm, as bees about their queen.

But when the days drew nigh that I should wed, 40
My father sent ambassadors with furs
And jewels, gifts, to fetch her; these brought back
A present, a great labor of the loom;
And therewithal an answer vague as wind;
Besides, they saw the king; he took the gifts; 45
He said there was a compact; that was true;
But then she had a will — was he to blame? —
And maiden fancies; loved to live alone
Among her women; certain, would not wed.

That morning in the presence room I stood 50
With Cyril and with Florian, my two friends:
The first, a gentleman of broken means
(His father's fault) but given to starts and bursts
Of revel; and the last, my other heart,
And almost my half-self, — for still we moved 55
Together, twinned as horse's ear and eye.

Now, while they spake, I saw my father's face
Grow long and troubled, like a rising moon,
Inflamed with wrath; he started on his feet,

41. **Furs.** Characteristic of the North.

51. Luce calls Cyril 'the incarnation of humorous common sense' (*Handbook*, p. 244).

55. **Half-self.** Perhaps from Horace, *Od.* I. iii. 8: 'animæ dimidium meæ.' The expression is said to have originated with Pythagoras: ἥμισυ τῆς ψυχῆς, 'half of the soul.'

56. **Twinned.** The first edition has **kin.** Woodberry says: 'The simile of the "horse's ear and eye" is, in its exactness, characteristic of Tennyson, but it is not noble.'

58. **Like a rising moon.** Have you ever observed this?

59–62. Cf. p. xl.

Tore the king's letter, snowed it down, and rent 60
The wonder of the loom thro' warp and woof
From skirt to skirt; and at the last he sware
That he would send a hundred thousand men,
And bring her in a whirlwind; then he chewed
The thrice-turned cud of wrath, and cooked his spleen, 65
Communing with his captains of the war.

At last I spoke. 'My father, let me go.
It cannot be but some gross error lies
In this report, this answer of a king
Whom all men rate as kind and hospitable; 70
Or, maybe, I myself, my bride once seen,
Whate'er my grief to find her less than fame,
May rue the bargain made.' And Florian said:
'I have a sister at the foreign court,
Who moves about the Princess; she, you know, 75
Who wedded with a nobleman from thence;
He, dying lately, left her, as I hear,
The lady of three castles in that land;
Thro' her this matter might be sifted clean.'
And Cyril whispered: 'Take me with you too.' 80
Then, laughing 'What if these weird seizures come
Upon you in those lands, and no one near
To point you out the shadow from the truth?

62. Sware. Such archaic forms are found in the Bible; cf. e.g. Heb. 3. 11.

65. Cooked his spleen. Nursed his anger. Churton Collins notes that this is derived from the *Iliad* (IV. 513). Taylor criticizes the expressions **chewed** and **cooked** (p. 19); see also p. xxxi.

66. Captains. Commanders, generals; as in the Bible.

71. My bride once seen. An absolute construction.

72. 'The expression "less than fame" is an adaptation of a common classical idiom; cf. IV. 427, "The dwarfs of presage"' (Wallace).

74. A sister. Cf. II. 89 ff.

Take me; I'll serve you better in a strait;
I grate on rusty hinges here;' but 'No!' 85
Roared the rough king, 'you shall not; we ourself
Will crush her pretty maiden fancies dead
In iron gauntlets; break the council up.'

But when the council broke, I rose and passed
Thro' the wild woods that hung about the town; 90
Found a still place, and plucked her likeness out;
Laid it on flowers, and watched it lying bathed
In the green gleam of dewy-tasseled trees:
What were those fancies? wherefore break her troth?
Proud looked the lips; but while I meditated 95

84. **Strait.** Difficulty.

85. **I grate on rusty hinges here.** Cf. *Holy Grail:*

> But here too much
> We molder — as to things without, I mean.

86–88. See p. xl.

87. **Maiden fancies.** Cf. 48.

90. **Hung.** Luce notes the mannerism in Tennyson's frequent use of this verb in the poetical sense here employed, — no fewer than nine times in *The Princess.*

91. **Likeness.** Cf. 37.

92. **Bathed.** Cf. *The Day-Dream* 29:

> Soft lustre bathes the range of urns
> On every slanting terrace-lawn.

93. **Dewy-tasseled.** Hallam Tennyson comments: 'Hung with catkins as in the hazel-wood. It was spring-time' (Wallace). Tennyson uses it again in *In Memoriam* (LXXXVI. 6):

> Thro' all the dewy-tasseled wood.

Brooke says (*Tennyson*, p. 160): 'The lines . . . exactly express that which is so rarely observed, — the different murmurs of differently foliaged trees in a faint wind, which a fine ear can distinguish in a wood, but which, when a fuller puff goes by, are merged into one chorus with the singing of birds and tossing of boughs.'

A wind arose and rushed upon the South,
And shook the songs, the whispers, and the shrieks
Of the wild woods together; and a Voice
Went with it, 'Follow, follow, thou shalt win.'

Then, ere the silver sickle of that month 100
Became her golden shield, I stole from court
With Cyril and with Florian, unperceived,
Cat-footed thro' the town, and half in dread
To hear my father's clamor at our backs,
With 'Ho!' from some bay-window shake the night; 105
But all was quiet; from the bastioned walls
Like threaded spiders, one by one, we dropped,
And flying reached the frontier; then we crossed
To a livelier land; and so by tilth and grange,

96–99. As long ago as 1880 Collins noted that this was a reminiscence of a quatrain from Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* (II. 1. 156–9):

> A wind arose among the pines; it shook
> The clinging music from their boughs, and then
> Low, sweet, faint sounds, like the farewell of ghosts,
> Were heard: 'Oh follow, follow, follow me!'

Dawson remarked (*Study*, p. 65), that it must have, consciously or unconsciously, dwelt in Tennyson's memory when writing these lines. See Tennyson's rejoinder in his letter, p. xxxviii.

Mrs. Ritchie's statement should also be noted (*Harper's Magazine* LXVIII. 21): 'The wind . . . once . . . came sweeping through the garden of this old Lincolnshire rectory, and, as the wind blew, a sturdy child of five years old, with shining locks, stood opening his arms upon the blast and letting himself be blown along, and as he traveled on he made his first line of poetry and said, "I hear a voice that 's speaking in the wind," and he tossed his arms, and the gust whirled on, sweeping into the great abyss of winds.' Compare also the line in *Rizpah:*

> And Willy's voice in the wind, 'O mother, come out to me.'

100. Briefly paraphrase the dependent clause.

109. Tilth. Cultivated soil; so in Milton, *Paradise Lost* XI. 430, and in *Enoch Arden* 676.—**Grange.** An isolated farmhouse

And vines, and blowing bosks of wilderness, 110
We gained the mother-city thick with towers,
And in the imperial palace found the king.

His name was Gama; cracked and small his voice,
But bland the smile that, like a wrinkling wind
On glassy water, drove his cheek in lines; 115
A little dry old man, without a star,
Not like a king. Three days he feasted us,
And on the fourth I spake of why we came,
And my betrothed. 'You do us, Prince,' he said,

regarded as the residence of a gentleman farmer (*Standard Dictionary*). Cf. the description of the grange in *Mariana*. There we have:

> Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
> Upon the lonely moated grange.

And in *Sir Galahad:*

> So pass I hostel, hall, and grange.

Also *In Memoriam* XCI. 12; C. 5.

110. **Blowing bosks of wilderness.** 'Uncultivated thickets blooming with wild flowers' (Dawson). Collins (*Illustrations of Tennyson*, p. 19) gives **bosks** as an illustration of Tennyson's propensity, like Virgil's, to 'affect archaisms and the revival or adoption of obsolete or provincial words.' Bristed says (*Amer. Mag.* VIII. 32): 'How like a journey in fairyland it is, with all those quaint Elizabethan words!'

111. **Mother-city.** Metropolis; cf. 'mother-town,' *In Memoriam* XCVIII. 21. What is the literal meaning of metropolis?

113. 'Gama is the impersonation of insignificance and effeminacy, and his view of women is, like his character, insignificant.'

114–5. Wace compares Shelley, *Prince Athanase* (II. ii. 47–51):

> But o'er the vision wan
> Of Athanase, a ruffling atmosphere
> Of dark emotion, a *swift shadow* ran,
> Like wind upon some forest-bosomed lake,
> *Glassy* and dark.

116. **Without a star.** Stars are frequently worn by persons of rank as indications of their membership in orders of nobility.

Airing a snowy hand and signet gem, 120
'All honor. We remember love ourselves
In our sweet youth; there did a cómpact pass
Long summers back, a kind of ceremony —
I think the year in which our olives failed.
I would you had her, Prince, with all my heart, 125
With my full heart; but there were widows here,
Two widows, Lady Psyche, Lady Blanche;
They fed her theories, in and out of place
Maintaining that with equal husbandry
The woman were an equal to the man. 130
They harped on this; with this our banquets rang;
Our dances broke and buzzed in knots of talk;
Nothing but this; my very ears were hot
To hear them; knowledge, so my daughter held,

121. Ourselves. Rolfe suggests that this should be **ourself,** comparing V. 198.

128 ff. Cf. III. 69 ff.; IV. 273 ff.; VI. 304 ff.

129. Husbandry. A pun?

134. Knowledge, etc. Dawson says (*Study*, p. 67): 'This is the central point of the Princess's delusion. Some have thought that Tennyson borrowed the idea of his poem from Johnson's *Rasselas.* It is a long way from *Rasselas* to *The Princess.* The following is the only passage upon which this theory is based, — a very slender support:

"The Princess thought that of all sublunary things knowledge was the best; she desired, first, to learn all sciences, and then proposed to found a college of learned women, in which she would preside, that by conversing with the old and educating the young she might divide her time between the acquisition and communication of wisdom." . . .

'Others suppose that the idea was suggested by *Love's Labor's Lost* I. 1:

> Our court shall be a little Academe,
> Still and contemplative in living art.

This is far more probable, because the plot of that play turns on the attempted seclusion of a king and his attendants for three

Was all in all; they had but been, she thought, 135
As children; they must lose the child, assume
The woman; then, Sir, awful odes she wrote,
Too awful, sure, for what they treated of,

years in study, during which time no woman was to approach the court. The disturbing influence of love upon such a plan is the motive of the comedy.'

Collins (*Illustrations of Tennyson*, p. 78) suggests the *Faerie Queene*, Bk. V., cantos iv.–vi., and adds: 'In any case, it should be carefully compared with the latter, as the moral and the teaching are identical; both being refutations of the theory advanced in the fifth book of Plato's *Republic*.' On the question of these origins, see Luce, *Handbook*, pp. 233–5.

On the larger question of the rank of mere knowledge, cf. *Locksley Hall:*

> Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers.

In Memoriam, Invocation:

> Let knowledge grow from more to more,
> But more of reverence in us dwell,
> That mind and soul, according well,
> May make one music as before,
> But vaster.

In Memoriam CXIV. 22–23:

> For she is earthly of the mind,
> But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.

And indeed the whole of *In Memoriam* CXIV, besides the following from Cowper's *Task* (VI. 88–99):

> Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,
> Have ofttimes no connection. Knowledge dwells
> In heads replete with thoughts of other men;
> Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
> Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,
> The mere materials with which wisdom builds
> Till smoothed, and squared, and fitted to its place,
> Does but encumber when it should enrich.
> Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much;
> Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.

136. **They must lose the child.** Cf. Prol. 133.

But all she is and does is awful; odes
About this losing of the child; and rimes 140
And dismal lyrics, prophesying change
Beyond all reason; these the women sang;
And they that know such things — I sought but peace;
No critic I — would call them masterpieces:
They mastered *me*. At last she begged a boon, 145
A certain summer palace which I have
Hard by your father's frontier; I said no,
Yet being an easy man, gave it; and there,
All wild to found an University
For maidens, on the spur she fled; and more 150
We know not, — only this: they see no men,
Not even her brother Arac, nor the twins
Her brethren, tho' they love her, look upon her
As on a kind of paragon; and I
(Pardon me saying it) were much loth to breed 155
Dispute betwixt myself and mine, but since
(And I confess with right) you think me bound
In some sort, I can give you letters to her;
And yet, to speak the truth, I rate your chance
Almost at naked nothing.'
Thus the king; 160

140. **Losing of the child.** This was to be the title of one of Tennyson's songs, though in an entirely different sense; cf. p. xxxvii. The word **child** proves to have a cardinal importance in the poem.

142. **These the women sang.** How different from what the women sing between these Cantos!

148. The line halts metrically.

149. **An.** Should be *A*.

151. The Princess, it has been said, commits three mistakes. This line discloses one, and lines 134–6 reveal two others. What are they? As you read on, see which of them are ultimately abandoned.

152. For these brothers, see V. 245 ff.

155. **Me.** For *my*?

And I, tho' nettled that he seemed to slur
With garrulous ease and oily courtesies
Our formal compact, yet, not less (all frets
But chafing me on fire to find my bride)
Went forth again with both my friends. We rode 165
Many a long league back to the North. At last,
From hills that looked across a land of hope,
We dropped with evening on a rustic town
Set in a gleaming river's crescent-curve,
Close at the boundary of the liberties; 170
There, entered an old hostel, called mine host
To council, plied him with his richest wines,
And showed the late-writ letters of the king.

He with a long low sibilation, stared
As blank as death in marble; then exclaimed, 175
Averring it was clear against all rules
For any man to go; but as his brain
Began to mellow, 'If the king,' he said,

163–4. **All frets . . . my bride.** 'All impediments serving only to aggravate my impatience to meet my betrothed face to face' (Wallace).

166. See p. xli.

167. **A land of hope.** Why so called?

168–9. **On a . . . crescent-curve.** In the early editions merely:

Upon a little town within a wood.

Note the poet's fondness for adding (irrelevant?) picturesque details.

170. **Liberties.** 'An English legal term for adjacent privileged territory, here used of the outskirts of the estate within which the exclusive rights granted to the Princess were exercised' (Woodberry).

171. **Mine host.** A Shakespearian phrase, which has become established in literature.

175. **As blank as death in marble.** Cf. V. 71–72.

'Had given us letters, was he bound to speak?
The king would bear him out;' and at the last — 180
The summer of the vine in all his veins —
'No doubt that we might make it worth his while.
She once had past that way; he heard her speak;
She scared him; life! he never saw the like;
She looked as grand as doomsday, and as grave; 185
And he, he reverenced his liege-lady there;
He always made a point to post with mares;
His daughter and his housemaid were the boys;
The land, he understood, for miles about
Was tilled by women; all the swine were sows, 190
And all the dogs' —
But while he jested thus,
A thought flashed thro' me which I clothed in act,
Remembering how we three presented Maid,
Or Nymph, or Goddess, at high tide of feast,
In masque or pageant at my father's court. 195
We sent mine host to purchase female gear;

179. **Bound to speak.** Either to allege the rules, or to reveal their intention to the Princess; it does not seem quite certain which.

181. Cf. *Marriage of Geraint* 398:

For now the wine made summer in his veins.

187–191. Is this in good taste? For what reason is it introduced?

188. **Boys.** Postilions.

193. **Presented.** Represented. Cf. Shakespeare, *Tempest* IV. i. 167.

194. **High tide.** Highest point; *tide* as in Whitsun*tide*. Cf. Shakespeare, *King John* III. i. 86:

Among the high tides in the calendar.

But there the word means 'festival,' 'holiday.'

195. What do you know of masques and pageants?

He brought it, and himself, a sight to shake
The midriff of despair with laughter, holp
To lace us up, till, each, in maiden plumes
We rustled. Him we gave a costly bribe 200
To guerdon silence, mounted our good steeds,
And boldly ventured on the liberties.

We followed up the river as we rode,
And rode till midnight, when the college lights
Began to glitter firefly-like in copse 205
And linden alley; then we past an arch,
Whereon a woman-statue rose with wings
From four winged horses dark against the stars;
And some inscription ran along the front,
But deep in shadow: further on we gained 210
A little street, half garden and half house;
But scarce could hear each other speak for noise
Of clocks and chimes, like silver hammers falling
On silver anvils, and the splash and stir

197–8. **A sight . . . with laughter.** Possibly suggested by Biron's question in *Love's Labor's Lost* (V. ii. 865):

> To move wild laughter in the throat of death?

198. **Holp.** Helped. An archaism.
201. **Guerdon.** Reward.
202. **Liberties.** Cf. 170.
206. **Linden alley.** Cf. IV. 191.
207. **With wings.** Why with wings?
209. Cf. II. 178.
211. How do you understand this?
213. **Clocks.** Cf. VII. 88–90.
214. **Anvils.** Contrast V. 493–4. Dawson comments on this passage (*Study*, p. 25): 'The love of precise punctuality, so deeply implanted in the female breast, has full scope at last, as far as pretty clocks go. Everywhere are busts and statues and lutes, and such like *bric-à-brac* aids to knowledge — promiscuously strewed

Of fountains spouted up and showering down 215
In meshes of the jasmine and the rose;
And all about us pealed the nightingale,
Rapt in her song, and careless of the snare.

There stood a bust of Pallas for a sign,
By two sphere lamps blazoned like Heaven and Earth 220
With constellation and with continent,
Above an entry; riding in, we called;
A plump-armed ostleress and a stable wench
Came running at the call, and helped us down.
Then stept a buxom hostess forth, and sailed, 225
Full-blown, before us into rooms which gave

about like blue china and crockery-ware bulldogs in a modern drawing-room. Instinctively the male reader shrinks through this part of the poem, fearful of upsetting something. Very properly, also, the path of knowledge, thorny to the tyrannous male, is made comfortable there. The ladies drink in science

Leaning deep in broidered down,

as is befitting. Everything matches in that university. No common pine — the professorial desk is of satinwood. Due attention is paid to dress, also; the doctors are violet-hooded, and the girls all uniformly in white — gregarious, though, even there, as in the outer world. The Princess, her hair still damp after her plunge in the river, though sitting in indignant judgment upon the culprits, has yet a jewel on her forehead.'

217. Cf. IV. 247.

219. Bust. Is this referred to again in VI. 347? — **Pallas.** Signifying what?

220–1. See p. xli.

221. Distributed how? Are the nouns to be understood as singulars or plurals?

224–5. After midnight? Did the college turn night into day? Cf. 204–5. Why wait till dawn to send a letter (241)?

226. Gave. Opened; like the French *donner*. Cf. Prol. 93, and *The Gardener's Daughter* 110.

Upon a pillared porch, the bases lost
In laurel; her we asked of that and this,
And who were tutors. 'Lady Blanche' she said,
'And Lady Psyche.' 'Which was prettiest, 230
Best-natured?' 'Lady Psyche.' 'Hers are we,'
One voice, we cried; and I sat down and wrote,
In such a hand as when a field of corn
Bows all its ears before the roaring East:

'Three ladies of the Northern empire pray 235
Your Highness would enroll them with your own,
As Lady Psyche's pupils.'
This I sealed;
The seal was Cupid bent above a scroll,
And o'er his head Uranian Venus hung,
And raised the blinding bandage from his eyes; 240

227. Pillared porch. Cf. the fuller description in II. 8–14. What style of architecture is indicated?

230. Prettiest. Tennyson evidently had not the fear of the modern grammarian before his eyes. So he writes in *Aylmer's Field* (364–5):

When two fight
The *strongest* wins.

233–4. The simile is from Homer (*Iliad* II. 147–8), as Wace notes: 'As when the west wind tosses a deep cornfield, rushing down with furious blast, and it bows with all its ears.' Why does he write such a hand? Was it usual with him?

239. Uranian Venus. Dawson notes that the allusion is to Plato's *Symposium* (180, D, E), thus translated by Jowett (II. 32): 'And am I not right in asserting that there are two goddesses? The elder one, having no mother, who is called the heavenly Aphrodite — she is the daughter of Uranus; the younger, who is the daughter of Zeus and Dione — her we call common; and the Love who is her fellow-worker may and must also have the name of common, as the other love is called heavenly.'

240. Is the 'blinding bandage' raised from the eyes of any of the characters of the poem before its close?

I gave the letter to be sent with dawn;
And then to bed, where half in doze I seemed
To float about a glimmering night, and watch
A full sea, glazed with muffled moonlight, swell
On some dark shore just seen that it was rich. 245

244. Cf. Tennyson's letter (p. xxxvii).

245. Will the latter part of 167 help you to interpret this? Bristed (p. 37) criticizes the grammar of this line.

As thro' the land at eve we went,
  And plucked the ripened ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
O we fell out I know not why,
  And kissed again with tears.

[[1]And blessings on the falling out
  That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love,
  And kiss again with tears.]

For when we came where lies the child
  We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
O there above the little grave,
  We kissed again with tears.

Cf. Prol. 236, and Tennyson's letter (p. 00). All these songs should be learned *by heart*, as well as memorized.

[1] I agree with Boynton that the song would be better without this quatrain, for which reason I have printed it in brackets. Tennyson seems once to have thought so himself, for he excised it from the fourth edition (1851), though he restored it in the fifth (1853). The form of the whole lyric in the third edition (1850) — where all the songs first appeared — may be learned from p. xxvi.

II.

At break of day the College Portress came;
She brought us Academic silks, in hue
The lilac, with a silken hood to each,
And zoned with gold; and now when these were on,
And we as rich as moths from dusk cocoons, 5
She, curtseying her obeisance, let us know
The Princess Ida waited. Out we paced,
I first, and following thro' the porch that sang
All round with laurel, issued in a court
Compact of lucid marbles, bossed with lengths 10
Of classic frieze, with ample awnings gay
Betwixt the pillars, and with great urns of flowers.
The Muses and the Graces, grouped in threes,

5. **Moths.** Cf. Prol. 144.

8. **Sang.** Murmured, rustled.

9. **Laurel.** Sacred to whom? What mythological personage was changed into the laurel?

10. **Compact.** Composed, with the added notion of close, firm, and neat combination. — **Lucid.** Cf. Browning's song in *Paracelsus:*

> A hundred shapes of lucid stone,

and Shelley's *Adonais* (XI. 1):

> Lucid urn of starry dew.

— **Marbles.** Cf. VI. 331. — **Bossed.** Carved in relief.

11. **Frieze.** Explain. Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost* IV. 184:

> Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven.

— **Awnings.** Is the scene tropical or semi-tropical? What country, should you say?

13. **Muses.** The deities who presided over poetry, art, and science, especially over the different kinds of poetry. They were nine in number: Clio, of history; Melpomene, of tragedy; Thalia, of

Enringed a billowing fountain in the midst;
And here and there on lattice edges lay 15
Or book or lute; but hastily we passed,
And up a flight of stairs into the hall.

There at a board by tome and paper sat,
With two tame leopards couched beside her throne,
All beauty compassed in a female form, 20
The Princess; liker to the inhabitant
Of some clear planet close upon the sun,
Than our man's earth; such eyes were in her head,
And so much grace and power, breathing down
From over her arched brows, with every turn 25
Lived thro' her to the tips of her long hands,
And to her feet. She rose her height, and said:

comedy; Euterpe, of lyric poetry; Terpsichore, of the choral song and dance; Erato, of amorous poetry; Calliope, of the epic; Urania, of astronomy; Polyhymnia, of lofty hymns. Apollo is their leader. — **Graces.** These were the goddesses of charm and loveliness, attendants on Aphrodite, the Queen of Love, and associated by Hesiod with the Muses. The ancients do not agree as to their number, but Hesiod and Pindar regard them as three: Aglaia, Euphrosyne, and Thalia. How were the Muses and Graces here represented, and why are they introduced?

16. **Lute.** Describe its appearance.

17. **Hall.** Gain some idea of its appearance from II. 416; VI. 334; II. 62–71; IV. 206–8. Was it Greek or Gothic?

20. Wallace compares *The Gardener's Daughter* 12–13:

> All grace
> Summed up and closed in little; — Juliet....

Bristed objects (*Amer. Rev.* VIII. 33): 'The sketch is too shadowy, methinks; not definiteness enough of touch in it.'

21. **The Princess.** Of what age? Cf. VI. 234; II. 92–93.

24. Bristed criticizes the use of **power** as a disyllable.

25. **Arched brows.** Cf. 406.

27. **Her height.** An adverbial accusative.

The foundress of the Babylonian wall,
The Carian Artemisia strong in war,
The Rhodope that built the pyramid,
Clelia, Cornelia, with the Palmyrene

66. 'This was Semiramis, wife of Ninus, a legendary personage, to whom are ascribed innumerable marvelous deeds and heroic achievements. The gigantic city of Babylon is only one of many that she is said to have built. She is supposed to have lived about B.C. 2182' (Wallace).

67. Artemisia. 'When Xerxes invaded Greece, she voluntarily joined his fleet with five beautiful ships, and in the battle of Salamis (B.C. 480) she distinguished herself by her prudence, courage, and perseverance, for which she was afterwards highly honored by the Persian king.' According to Herodotus (VIII. 87), in order to escape from the battle, she bore down on a friendly ship and sank it.

68. Rhodope. 'Some of the Grecians erroneously say that this pyramid is the work of the courtesan Rhodōpis; but they evidently appear to me ignorant who Rhodōpis was, for they would not else have attributed to her the building of such a pyramid, on which, so to speak, numberless thousands of talents were expended; besides, Rhodōpis flourished in the reign of Amasis, and not at this time; for she was very many years later than those kings who left these pyramids. By birth she was a Thracian, servant to Iadmon. . . . Rhodōpis was made free, and continued in Egypt, and, being very lovely, acquired great riches for a person of her condition, though no way sufficient to erect such a pyramid. . . . The courtesans of Nancratis are generally very lovely; for, in the first place, this one, of whom this account is given, became so famous that all the Greeks became familiar with the name of Rhodōpis,' etc. (Herodotus II. 134–5). Notice Tennyson's change of accent in the word.

'It has been shown by Bunsen and others that

The Rhodope that built the pyramid

was Nitocris, the beautiful Egyptian queen who was the heroine of so many legends' (Wharton, *Sappho*, p. 6).

Did Tennyson mean to suggest that the Princess's inaccuracy was a characteristically feminine trait? How does 68 agree with 63?

69. Clelia. Properly *Clœlia*. 'A Roman virgin, who was one of the hostages given to Porsena with other maidens and boys, is

That fought Aurelian, and the Roman brows 70
Of Agrippina. Dwell with these, and lose

said to have escaped from the Etruscan camp and to have swum across the Tiber to Rome. She was sent back by the Romans to Porsena, who was so struck with her gallant deed that he not only set her at liberty, but allowed her to take with her a part of the hostages; she chose those under age, as they were most exposed to ill treatment.' The Roman people rewarded her with the statue of a female on horseback, which was erected in the Sacred Way.

Cornelia. 'As the daughter of the conqueror of Hannibal, the mother of the Gracchi, and the mother-in-law of the taker of Carthage and Numantia, Cornelia occupies a prouder position than any other woman in Roman history. . . . The Roman people erected a statue to her, with the inscription: CORNELIA, MOTHER OF THE GRACCHI.'

Zenobia. After the death of her husband (about 266), she succeeded him. 'She appeared in martial attire at the head of the troops, shared their toils both on horseback and on foot, was at once liberal and prudent in the administration of the revenues, strict in dispensing justice, merciful in the exercise of power.' In A.D. 272 she was made prisoner by the Emperor Aurelian. 'Loaded with costly jewels, fettered hand and foot with shackles of gold, she was led by a golden chain before the chariot of Aurelian along the Sacred Way, while all Rome gazed with eager curiosity on the Arabian princess.' See the account in Gibbon.

70–71. **The Roman brows Of Agrippina.** 'This lady, the granddaughter of the Emperor Augustus and the wife of his general, Germanicus, was another typical Roman matron, cultured, courageous, and devoted to her husband and family. She died A.D. 33. The form of this clause is borrowed from the classics; thus Homer has:

> τοῖσι δὲ καὶ μετέειφ' ἱερὴ ἷς Τηλεμάχοιο *Odyssey* II. 409),
> "And among them spake the godlike strength of Telemachus"

(*i.e.* "Telemachus, that goodly youth"), and Horace:

> . . . inquit sententia dia Catonis (*Satires* I. ii. 32),
> ". . . said the divine judgment of Cato"

(*i.e.* "Cato divinely wise"). Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost* VI. 355: "where the might of Gabriel fought" (*i.e.* "Gabriel, the mighty").

Convention, since to look on noble forms
Makes noble thro' the sensuous organism
That which is higher. O lift your natures up;
Embrace our aims; work out your freedom. Girls, 75
Knowledge is now no more a fountain sealed;
Drink deep, until the habits of the slave,
The sins of emptiness, gossip and spite
And slander, die. Better not be at all
Than not be noble. Leave us; you may go; 80
To-day the Lady Psyche will harangue
The fresh arrivals of the week before;

The special form of the periphrasis in the text is most appropriate; the Princess is pointing out the marble statue of Agrippina, of which, no doubt, the brows would indicate the dignity of that lady's character.' . . .

'The statues are those of eight of the most eminent women of antiquity, representing respectively legislative sagacity, political enterprise, military prowess, architectural skill, physical courage, intellectual culture, imperial ambition, and wifely devotion' (Wallace).

For other statues in this hall, see IV. 207–8; VI. 347–8.

72–74. **Since . . . higher.** Is this true? Dawson quotes Shelley (*Prince Athanase* II. i. 15–17):

> 'The mind becomes that which it contemplates'—
> And thus Zonoras, by forever seeing
> Their bright creations, grew like wisest men.

How does this agree with 2 Cor. 3. 18?

75–76. Cf. V. 409–413.

76. **Fountain sealed.** Cf. Canticles 4. 12.

77. Luce says (p. 238): 'She used Pope's phrase, "Drink deep," and followed it with words of high purpose. With such a woman to tend it, the drooping flower of knowledge would in due time be changed to fruit of wisdom. This is fairly certain from the prominence she gave to art and moral teaching.'

77–78. Cf. p. xli.

79–80. **Better . . . noble.** Memorize.

80. **Us.** The plural of royalty.

For they press in from all the provinces,
And fill the hive.'
She spoke, and bowing waved
Dismissal; back again we crossed the court 85
To Lady Psyche's. As we entered in,
There sat along the forms, like morning doves
That sun their milky bosoms on the thatch,
A patient range of pupils; she herself
Erect behind a desk of satin-wood, 90
A quick brunette, well-molded, falcon-eyed,
And on the hither side, or so she looked,
Of twenty summers. At her left, a child,
In shining draperies, headed like a star,
Her maiden babe, a double April old, 95
Aglaïa slept. We sat; the Lady glanced;
Then Florian — but no livelier than the dame

84. **Hive.** Cf. IV. 514.
87. **Doves.** Cf. IV. 150.
93. **Summers.** How is the child's age expressed (95)?
94. **Shining draperies.** Cf. VI. 118. — **Headed like a star.** Collins remarks: 'So Homer of Astyanax:

> Ἑκτορίδην ἀγαπητὸν ἀλίγκιον ἀστέρι καλῷ
> Hector's loved son, like unto a beautiful star.

It is worth noticing that the only beauty in Hobbes' translation of the *Iliad* is in his version of this passage:

> 'And, like a star, upon her bosom lay
> His beautiful and shining golden head.'

Hallam Tennyson says: 'With bright golden hair' (Wallace).
96. **The Lady glanced.** Cf. 285. How could she have the self-possession to go on with so eloquent a lecture? Note whether, in the sequel, she seems so strong and self-contained a character as this would imply.
97. **Dame.** Dawson's comment is: 'This is an outright slander. Ovid is the authority for this story about Midas, and he distinctly says it was a barber who was unable to keep the secret. Tennyson

That whispered 'Asses' ears' among the sedge —
'My sister.' 'Comely, too, by all that's fair,'
Said Cyril. 'O hush, hush!' and she began. 100

'This world was once a fluid haze of light,
Till toward the centre set the starry tides,

follows Chaucer.... The passage alluded to is in the *Wife of Bath's Tale.*' The passage runs as follows:

> That, save his wyf, ther wiste of it na-mo.
> He loved hire most, and trusted hir also;
> He preyede hir that to no creature
> She sholde tellen of his disfigure.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> And sith she dorste telle it to no man,
> Doun to a mareys faste by she ran;
> Til she came there, hir herte was a-fyre,
> And, as a bitore bombleth in the myre
> She leyde hir mouth un-to the water doun:
> 'Biwreye me nat, thou water, with thy soun,'
> Quod she, 'to thee I telle it, and namo;
> Myn housbond hath longe asses eres two!
> Now is myn herte all hool, now it is oute;
> I mighte no lenger kepe it, out of doute.'

One of these lines may have suggested that in *Claribel:*

> At eve the beetle boometh.

Bitterns boom, but do beetles?

101. Rolfe and Collins compare Prior's *Alma* I. 369–378:

> She kindly talk'd, at least three hours,
> Of plastic forms, and mental powers;
> Described our pre-existing station
> Before this vile terrene creation;
> And lest I should grow wearied, madam,
> To cut things short, came down to Adam;
> From whence, as fast as she was able,
> She drowns the world, and builds up Babel;
> Thro' Syria, Persia, Greece, she goes,
> And takes the Romans in the close.

The nebular hypothesis here set forth was first suggested by Laplace, about the beginning of the present century. Cf. the reference in *In Memoriam* CXVIII. 7–12.

And eddied into suns, that wheeling cast
The planets; then the monster, then the man;
Tattooed or woaded, winter-clad in skins, 105
Raw from the prime, and crushing down his mate;
As yet we find in barbarous isles, — and here
Among the lowest.'
Thereupon she took
A bird's-eye view of all the ungracious past;
Glanced at the legendary Amazon 110
As emblematic of a nobler age;
Appraised the Lycian custom, spoke of those
That lay at wine with Lar and Lucumo;

105. **Woaded.** Dyed with woad, a former substitute for indigo. It is identified with *vitrum*, with which, according to Cæsar, the ancient Britons painted their bodies.

106. **Prime.** For the meaning of this word cf. *In Memoriam* LVI:

> Dragons of the *prime*,
> That tare each other in their slime,
> Were mellow music matched with him.

112. **Lycian custom.** Herodotus I. 173: 'They have one custom peculiar to themselves, . . . for they take their name from their mothers, and not from their fathers; so that if any one ask another who he is, he will describe himself by his mother's side, and reckon up his maternal ancestry in the female line.'

113. 'That is, the Etruscan women, who in the paintings at Volterra are depicted as sharing the banquets with their husbands. *Lar* or *Lars* was an honorary appellation in Etruria, and = the English *Lord* (cf. Macaulay, *Horatius:* "Lars Porsena of Clusium," etc.); and *Lucumo* was a title given to the Etruscan princes and priests, like the Roman *patricius*' (Rolfe).

Dawson says: 'In the paintings at Volterra the females are represented seated at banquets with their husbands and mixing freely in society. From the same source we learn that girls were sent to school, and we may argue from the number of rolls in the pupils' hands that the higher education was not neglected.' He refers to Chambers' *Papers for the People*, Art. 'Sepulchres of Etruria,' p. 14. Otfried Müller, an authority on the subject, tells us

Ran down the Persian, Grecian, Roman lines
Of empire, and the woman's state in each, 115
How far from just; till, warming with her theme,
She fulmined out her scorn of laws Salique,
And little-footed China; touched on Mahomet
With much contempt, and came to chivalry,
When some respect, however slight, was paid 120
To woman — superstition all awry;
However, then commenced the dawn; a beam
Had slanted forward, falling in a land
Of promise; fruit would follow. Deep, indeed,
Their debt of thanks to her who first had dared 125
To leap the rotten pales of prejudice,
Disyoke their necks from custom, and assert
None lordlier than themselves but that which made
Woman and man. She had founded; they must build.

(*Die Etrusker* I. 376) that the 'Lycian custom' prevailed in Etruria, and conjectures that Mæcenas was a *maternal* name of the celebrated friend of Augustus.

117. **Fulmined.** Thundered. Cf. Milton, *Paradise Regained* IV. 270. — **Laws Salique.** Cf. *Hen. V.* I. ii.:

> The land Salique is in Germany,
> Between the floods of Sala and of Elbe;
> Where Charles the Great, having subdued the Saxons,
> . . . . . .
> Established then this law; to wit, no female
> Should be inheritrix in Salique land.

118. **Little-footed.** Cf. V. 366. Scan the line, and cf. the scansion of IV. 309. On Mahomet, Hallam Tennyson asks: 'Does she allude to a report once popular that Mahomet denied that women have souls, or had she heard that according to the Mohammedan doctrine hell was chiefly peopled with women?' (Wallace.)

121. **Superstition all awry.** What is the syntactical function of this phrase?

124. **Fruit.** Mixed metaphor?

126. **Pales.** Cf. *In Memoriam* CXI. 8.

128. **That which.** One rather expects *Him who.*

Here might they learn whatever men were taught; 130
Let them not fear. Some said their heads were less;
Some men's were small; not they the least of men;
For often fineness compensated size;
Besides, the brain was like the hand, and grew
With using; thence the man's, if more, was more. 135
He took advantage of his strength to be
First in the field; some ages had been lost;
But woman ripened earlier, and her life
Was longer; and albeit their glorious names
Were fewer, scattered stars, yet since in truth 140
The highest is the measure of the man,
And not the Kaffir, Hottentot, Malay,
Nor those horn-handed breakers of the glebe,
But Homer, Plato, Verulam; even so
With woman. And in arts of government 145
Elizabeth and others; arts of war
The peasant Joan and others; arts of grace
Sappho and others, vied with any man:

130. Cf. 367.
132. Is not **men** here used in two different senses?
143. Cf. our humorous 'Horny-handed sons of toil.'
144. **Homer, Plato, Verulam.** Cf. *The Palace of Art:*

> And there the Ionian father of the rest;
> A million wrinkles carved his skin;
> A hundred winters snowed upon his breast,
> From cheek and throat and chin.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> And thro' the topmost Oriel's colored flame
> Two godlike faces gazed below;
> Plato the wise, and large-browed Verulam,
> The first of those who know.

147. **Joan.** Cf. any good biography of Joan of Arc, one of the finest characters in history.

148. **Sappho.** Perhaps you may sometime see a beautiful little volume with this title, by H. T. Wharton. If so, do not fail to read

And, last not least, she who had left her place,
And bowed her state to them, that they might grow 150
To use and power on this oasis, lapt
In the arms of leisure, sacred from the blight
Of ancient influence and scorn.
At last
She rose upon a wind of prophecy,
Dilating on the future: 'Everywhere 155

it. I quote certain extracts: 'Such was her unique renown that she was called "The Poetess," just as Homer was "The Poet." Plato numbers her among the Wise. Plutarch speaks of the grace of her poems acting on her listeners like an enchantment' (p. 27). 'Her image was engraved on the coins of Mitylene, — "though she was a woman," as Aristotle remarks' (p. 29). Addison, in *Spectator*, No. 223, says of her works: 'They are filled with such bewitching tenderness and rapture that it might have been dangerous to have given them a reading' (cf. p. 31). Theodore Watts has written of her: 'Never before these songs were sung, and never since, did the human soul in the grip of a fiery passion utter a cry like hers; and, from the executive point of view, in directness, in lucidity, in that high imperious verbal economy which only Nature can teach the artist, she has no equal, and none worthy to take the place of second' (p. vii). Swinburne has authority for speaking of

The small dark body's Lesbian loveliness.

(Cf. p. 26.) The Sapphic metre is well represented by the following from Swinburne:

All the night sleep came not upon my eyelids,
Shed not dew, nor shook nor unclosed a feather,
Yet with lips shut close and with eyes of iron
Stood and beheld me.

(Cf. p. 46.) Tennyson refers to her in *Leonine Elegiacs* 13, and imitates her most famous poem in *Eleänore* 127–141. She 'is said to have been at the zenith of her fame about the year 610 B.C. During her lifetime Jeremiah first began to prophesy (628 B.C.), Daniel was carried away to Babylon (606 B.C.),' etc. (p. 1).

151. **Oasis.** Pronounce.

155 ff. How does this differ from VII. 239 ff.?

Two heads in council, two beside the hearth,
Two in the tangled business of the world,
Two in the liberal offices of life,
Two plummets dropped for one to sound the abyss
Of science, and the secrets of the mind; 160
Musician, painter, sculptor, critic, more;
And everywhere the broad and bounteous Earth
Should bear a double growth of those rare souls,
Poets, whose thoughts enrich the blood of the world.'

She ended here, and beckoned us; the rest 165
Parted; and, glowing full-faced welcome, she
Began to address us, and was moving on
In gratulation, till, as when a boat
Tacks, and the slackened sail flaps, all her voice
Faltering and fluttering in her throat, she cried, 170
'My brother!' 'Well, my sister.' 'O,' she said,
'What do you here? and in this dress? and these?
Why, who are these? a wolf within the fold!
A pack of wolves! the Lord be gracious to me!
A plot, a plot, a plot, to ruin all!' 175
'No plot, no plot,' he answered. 'Wretched boy,

164. Memorize. Cf. Prol. 132; III. 256; VII. 159. Notice a metrical peculiarity in this line, and cf. IV. 511.

165 ff. See p. xli.

166. Parted. Cf. VI. 202. — **Glowing full-faced welcome.** Because of the recognition (cf. 285)?

168–70. Till as when . . . in her throat. 'Notice the skill with which the metre of this passage is distorted to correspond to the sense. The confused structure of 169, with pauses in the middle of the first and fourth feet (a trochee and a spondee respectively), and the introduction into 170 of two extra syllables that must be hastened over, seem to sympathize with the shock, the interruption, and the tremor, which the poet is describing. Cf. for similar effects IV. 162–7, 195, 370, 461; VI. 69; VII. 210, 230' (Wallace).

How saw you not the inscription on the gate,
LET NO MAN ENTER IN ON PAIN OF DEATH'?
'And if I had,' he answered, 'who could think
The softer Adams of your Academe, 180
O sister, Sirens tho' they be, were such
As chanted on the blanching bones of men?'
'But you will find it otherwise,' she said.
'You jest: ill jesting with edge-tools! My vow
Binds me to speak, and O that iron will, 185
That axelike edge unturnable, our Head,
The Princess.' 'Well then, Psyche, take my life,
And nail me like a weasel on a grange
For warning; bury me beside the gate,
And cut this epitaph above my bones: 190
Here lies a brother by a sister slain,
All for the common good of womankind.'
'Let me die too,' said Cyril, 'having seen
And heard the Lady Psyche.'
I struck in:
'Albeit so masked, Madam, I love the truth; 195
Receive it; and in me behold the Prince
Your countryman, affianced years ago
To the Lady Ida; here, for here she was,
And thus (what other way was left?) I came.'
'O Sir, O Prince, I have no country, none; 200
If any, this; but none. Whate'er I was

178. Cf. VI. 306–8. To what century would you refer such a threat? It is evidently modeled on Dante's

All hope abandon, ye who enter in.

180. **Academe.** Probably from Shakespeare, *L. L. L.* I. i. 13.

181. **Sirens.** Cf. IV. 44–48 and the *Odyssey*, Bk. XII.

184. The proverb is found in Beaumont and Fletcher, and earlier.

185. **Iron will.** Cf. I. 47; VI. 102.

Disrooted, what I am is grafted here.
Affianced, Sir? Love-whispers may not breathe
Within this vestal limit, and how should I,
Who am not mine, say, live? The thunderbolt 205
Hangs silent; but prepare; I speak; it falls.'
'Yet pause,' I said: 'for that inscription there,
I think no more of deadly lurks therein
Than in a clapper clapping in a garth,
To scare the fowl from fruit; if more there be, 210
If more and acted on, what follows? war;
Your own work marred; for this your Academe,
Whichever side be victor, in the halloo
Will topple to the trumpet down, and pass
With all fair theories only made to gild 215
A stormless summer.' 'Let the Princess judge
Of that' she said; 'farewell, Sir — and to you.
I shudder at the sequel, but I go.'

'Are you that Lady Psyche,' I rejoined,
'The fifth in line from that old Florian — 220
Yet hangs his portrait in my father's hall
(The gaunt old Baron with his beetle brow
Sun-shaded in the heat of dusty fights)

205. **Thunderbolt.** Cf. Prol. 43.
207. **For.** As for.
209. **Garth.** Garden.
210. **Fowl.** Meaning?
222. **Beetle.** A difficult but interesting word. Either 'shaggy, bushy,' or 'jutting, prominent' — it is hard to determine which — and often with the suggestion of 'scowling, lowering.' — **Brow.** Originally *beetle* was applied to eyebrows. Here the word seems to mean 'forehead.'
223. **Sun-shaded.** The reference of the word is not clear. Wallace explains: 'Shaded from the sun by the palm of his hand'; but one would hardly continue to hold one's hand thus 'in the heat of dusty fights.' On the other hand, Woodberry un-

As he bestrode my Grandsire, when he fell,
And all else fled? we point to it, and we say, 225
The loyal warmth of Florian is not cold,
But branches current yet in kindred veins.'
'Are you that Psyche,' Florian added; 'she
With whom I sang about the morning hills,
Flung ball, flew kite, and raced the purple fly, 230

derstands the 'jutting eyebrows' as being 'so shaggy as to shade the eyes from the sunlight in a fight'; but why in a fight rather than at any other time when the sun shone? and did the sun always shine during a fight? It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the fault is Tennyson's: who is sun-shaded, or what? and how?

224. Bestrode. Rolfe properly says: To defend him. Cf. Shakespeare, *C. of E.* V. i. 192:

> When I bestrid thee in the wars, and took
> Deep scars to save thy life;

and 1 *Hen. IV.* V. i. 122: 'Hal, if thou see me down in the battle, and bestride me, so; 't is a point of friendship.' Another good illustration is from Heywood's *The Royal King and the Loyal Subject* I. i.:

> Twice that perilous day
> Did he *bestride* me; and beneath his targe
> Methought that instant did I lie as safe
> As in my best and strongest citadel,
> The whilst his bright sword, like the bolt of Jove,
> Pierced the steel crests of barbarous infidels,
> And flatted them with earth.

Grandsire. Probably meaning ancestor in general. Does this description date the grandsire's epoch?

229. Morning hills. Cf. *Œnone* 46–48:

> I waited underneath the *dawning hills;*
> Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,
> And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine.

Also *T. of Shrew* II. i. 174:

> As *morning roses* newly washed with dew.

Cf. 'morning fields,' *Hen. V.* IV. ii. 40.

230. Fly. Butterfly.

And snared the squirrel of the glen? are you
That Psyche, wont to bind my throbbing brow,
To smooth my pillow, mix the foaming draught
Of fever, tell me pleasant tales, and read
My sickness down to happy dreams? are you 235
That brother-sister Psyche, both in one?
You were that Psyche, but what are you now?'
'You are that Psyche,' Cyril said, 'for whom
I would be that for ever which I seem,
Woman, if I might sit beside your feet, 240
And glean your scattered sapience.'
Then once more,
'Are you that Lady Psyche,' I began,
'That on her bridal morn, before she past
From all her old companions, when the king
Kissed her pale cheek, declared that ancient ties 245
Would still be dear beyond the southern hills;
That were there any of our people there
In want or peril, there was one to hear
And help them? Look! for such are these and I.'
'Are you that Psyche,' Florian asked, 'to whom, 250
In gentler days, your arrow-wounded fawn
Came flying while you sat beside the well?

238-241. What is the sentiment that here actuates Cyril, — that indicated by I. 77–80, by II. 99, or merely the desire to save his life? Cf. 193–4.

240. See p. xli.

241. Does Cyril here employ the tone of banter or of earnestness?

242 ff. Observe how skillfully the poet at once characterizes Psyche and relates her past.

245. Pale. Was Psyche dark or light?

251. Arrow-wounded fawn. Collins compares *Æn.* VII. 483–504, the account of Sylvia's pet stag and its wounding. Perhaps a hint may have been derived from the melancholy Jaques' sympathy, *A. Y. L.* II. i. 33–66.

The creature laid his muzzle on your lap,
And sobbed, and you sobbed with it, and the blood
Was sprinkled on your kirtle, and you wept. 255
That was fawn's blood, not brother's, yet you wept.
O by the bright head of my little niece,
You were that Psyche, and what are you now?'
'You are that Psyche,' Cyril said again,
'The mother of the sweetest little maid 260
That ever crowed for kisses.'
'Out upon it!'
She answered, 'peace! and why should I not play
The Spartan Mother with emotion, be
The Lucius Junius Brutus of my kind?
Him you call great; he for the common weal, 265
The fading politics of mortal Rome,
As I might slay this child, if good need were,
Slew both his sons; and I, shall I, on whom
The secular emancipation turns
Of half this world, be swerved from right to save 270
A prince, a brother? A little will I yield;

254. Sobbed. Cf. *A. Y. L.* II. i. 66: 'the sobbing deer.'

255. Kirtle. Meaning?

259–261. Is this cold calculation on Cyril's part?

261. Crowed. So in *Will Waterproof's Lyrical Monologue* 126; but **crew** in *Morte d' Arthur*, Ep. 10: 'The cock crew' (a reminiscence of the New Testament?).

263. Spartan. The Spartans were taught to sacrifice their natural feelings upon the altar of the public good.

264. Brutus. 'Resolved to maintain the freedom of the infant republic, he loved his country better than his children, and accordingly put to death his two sons, when they were detected in a conspiracy with several others of the young Roman nobles for the purpose of restoring the Tarquins.' He is said to have been elected consul B.C. 509.

269. Secular. Derivation, and meaning here? It is contrasted with **fading** and **mortal**, 266.

Best so, perchance, for us, and well for you.
O hard, when love and duty clash! I fear
My conscience will not count me fleckless; yet—
Hear my conditions: promise (otherwise 275
You perish), as you came, to slip away
To-day, to-morrow, soon; it shall be said,
These women were too barbarous, would not learn;
They fled, who might have shamed us; promise, all.'

What could we else? we promised each; and she, 280
Like some wild creature newly-caged, commenced
A to-and-fro, so pacing till she paused
By Florian; holding out her lily arms
Took both his hands, and smiling faintly said:
'I knew you at the first; tho' you have grown, 285
You scarce have altered; I am sad and glad
To see you, Florian. *I* give thee to death,
My brother! it was duty spoke, not I.
My needful seeming harshness, pardon it.
Our mother, is she well?'
With that she kissed 290
His forehead, then, a moment after, clung
About him, and betwixt them blossomed up
From out a common vein of memory
Sweet household talk, and phrases of the hearth,

274. **Fleckless.** Spotless.

275 ff. Trace the process by which Psyche has been led to keep three young men, imperfectly disguised (cf. 285), in a College of six hundred girls who had sworn to abjure men's society for three years — she herself being one of the Heads of the College.

Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret (Horace, *Ep.* I. x. 24). Note future illustrations of the maxim; here is the first.

277. No specific time is insisted upon. Why?

289. **Needful-seeming harshness** or **needful seeming-harshness?**

290. Has Tennyson caught a suggestion from Gen. 43. 27; 45. 3, 15?

And far allusion, till the gracious dews 295
Began to glisten and to fall: and while
They stood, so rapt, we gazing, came a voice:
'I brought a message here from Lady Blanche.'
Back started she, and turning round we saw
The Lady Blanche's daughter where she stood, 300
Melissa, with her hand upon the lock,
A rosy blonde, and in a college gown
That clad her like an April daffodilly
(Her mother's color), with her lips apart,
And all her thoughts as fair within her eyes 305
As bottom agates, seen to wave and float
In crystal currents of clear morning seas.

295. **Gracious dews.** Cf. *Jul. Cæs.* III. ii. 197–8:

> O, now you weep, and, I perceive, you feel
> The dint of pity; these are *gracious* drops;

and *K. John* V. ii. 45–46:

> Let me wipe off this honorable *dew*,
> That silverly doth progress on thy cheeks.

301. 'Nearly every person who comes on the stage makes his or her strongly accented bow from the forefront of the line, and pauses' [quoting this, and II. 21] (Luce, *Handbook*, p. 432).

302. **Rosy blonde.** Are we told of any other blondes?

304. **Her mother's.** Cf. I. 231; III. 17 ff. — **Color.** Yellow.

305–7. Dawson says: 'A parallel passage occurs in Moore, *Loves of the Angels:*

> I soon could track each thought that lay
> Gleaming within her heart, as clear
> As pebbles within brooks appear.

And also in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* I. i. [111]:

> You cannot read it there; there through my tears,
> Like wrinkled pebbles in a glassy stream,
> You may behold them.'

307. **Morning seas.** Cf. note on 229.

So stood that same fair creature at the door.
Then Lady Psyche, 'Ah — Melissa — you!
You heard us?' and Melissa, 'O pardon me, 310
I heard, I could not help it, did not wish:
But, dearest Lady, pray you fear me not,
Nor think I bear that heart within my breast,
To give three gallant gentlemen to death.'
'I trust you,' said the other, 'for we two 315
Were always friends, none closer, elm and vine:
But yet your mother's jealous temperament —
Let not your prudence, dearest, drowse, or prove
The Danaïd of a leaky vase, for fear
This whole foundation ruin, and I lose 320
My honor, these their lives.' 'Ah, fear me not,'
Replied Melissa; 'no — I would not tell,
No, not for all Aspasia's cleverness,
No, not to answer, Madam, all those hard things

313–4. What form does Nature take here? *Why* has she not the heart?

316. **None closer.** Cf. the friendship of Hermia and Helena, *M. N. D.* III. ii. 201 ff. — **Elm and vine.** Cf. *M. N. D.* IV. i. 48–49, and *Com. of Err.* II. ii. 176. The figure is classical; cf. Catullus LXII. 49–56, and Ovid, *Amor.* II. xvi. 41–42:

> Ulmus amat vitem, vitis non deserit ulmum;
> Separor a domina cur ego saepe mea?

319. **Danaïd.** The Danaids were punished in Hades for the murder of their husbands by being compelled everlastingly to pour water into a vessel full of holes.

Do these young women talk naturally, or does Tennyson make them talk in such a way as to enable him to indulge in graceful learned allusion?

320. **Ruin.** Cf. *Lucretius* 40:

> *Ruining* along the illimitable inane.

323. **Aspasia.** The friend of Pericles, a most accomplished woman.

324. **A harsh line.**

That Sheba came to ask of Solomon.' 325
'Be it so' the other, 'that we still may lead
The new light up, and culminate in peace;
For Solomon may come to Sheba yet.'
Said Cyril, 'Madam, he the wisest man
Feasted the woman wisest then, in halls 330
Of Lebanonian cedar: nor should you
(Tho', Madam, *you* should answer, *we* would ask)
Less welcome find among us, if you came
Among us, debtors for our lives to you,
Myself for something more.' He said not what; 335
But 'Thanks,' she answered; 'go; we have been too long
Together; keep your hoods about the face;
They do so that affect abstraction here.
Speak little; mix not with the rest; and hold
Your promise; all, I trust, may yet be well.' 340

We turned to go, but Cyril took the child,
And held her round the knees against his waist,
And blew the swoln cheek of a trumpeter,
While Psyche watched them, smiling, and the child
Pushed her flat hand against his face and laughed; 345
And thus our conference closed.
And then we strolled
For half the day thro' stately theatres

325. **Sheba.** Not the name of a woman, but of a country. Cf. 1 Kings 10. 1–13; 2 Chron. 9. 1–12. But in all periods of English literature it has been common to assume that Sheba (or Saba, following the Latin) was her own name. Thus *Hen. VIII.* V. v. 24–26:

> Saba was never
> More covetous of wisdom and fair virtue
> Than this pure soul shall be.

331. **Lebanonian cedar.** Cf. 1 Kings 5. 6; 7. 1; 9. 1, 10, 11.
335. What was it?
341. Cf. 260.

Benched crescent-wise. In each we sat, we heard
The grave Professor. On the lecture slate
The circle rounded under female hands 350
With flawless demonstration; followed then
A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,
With scraps of thundrous epic lilted out
By violet-hooded Doctors, elegies
And quoted odes, and jewels five-words-long 355
That on the stretched forefinger of all Time
Sparkle for ever; then we dipped in all
That treats of whatsoever is: the State;
The total chronicles of man, the mind,
The morals, something of the frame; the rock, 360
The star, the bird, the fish, the shell, the flower
Electric, chemic laws, and all the rest;
And whatsoever can be taught and known;
Till, like three horses that have broken fence
And glutted all night long breast-deep in corn, 365
We issued gorged with knowledge, and I spoke:
'Why, Sirs, they do all this as well as we.'
'They hunt old trails' said Cyril 'very well;
But when did woman ever yet invent?'
'Ungracious!' answered Florian; 'have you learnt 370
No more from Psyche's lecture, you that talked
The trash that made me sick, and almost sad?'

353. **Lilted out.** According to Hallam Tennyson, 'declaimed in a feminine voice' (Wallace).

355–7. **Jewels . . . for ever.** Memorize. What are some of those jewels in this poem?

357. See p. xli.

360. **Something** of man's bodily frame, — not much. Cf. III. 289 ff.

366. **Knowledge.** Cf. I. 134.

369. When did she?

371. **From Psyche's lecture.** What originators did she adduce?

372. What does Florian refer to?

'O trash' he said, 'but with a kernel in it.
Should I not call her wise, who made me wise?
And learnt? I learnt more from her in a flash, 375
Than if my brainpan were an empty hull,
And every Muse tumbled a science in.
A thousand hearts lie fallow in these halls,
And round these halls a thousand baby loves
Fly twanging headless arrows at the hearts, 380
Whence follows many a vacant pang; but O
With me, Sir, entered in the bigger boy,
The Head of all the golden-shafted firm,
The long-limbed lad that had a Psyche too;
He cleft me thro' the stomacher. And now 385
What think you of it, Florian? do I chase
The substance or the shadow? will it hold?
I have no sorcerer's malison on me,
No ghostly hauntings like His Highness. I
Flatter myself that always everywhere 390
I know the substance when I see it. Well,
Are castles shadows? Three of them? Is she,
The sweet proprietress, a shadow? If not,
Shall those three castles patch my tattered coat?

375. **Learnt more from her.** Cf. *L. L. L.* IV. iii. 299–354.

377. See p. xli.

378. **Thousand.** Is this to be taken literally? Cf. 448.

383. **Head.** Cupid.—**Golden-shafted.** According to Ovid, *Met.* I. 470.

384. **Psyche.** The story of Cupid and Psyche is to be found in Apuleius. In our time William Morris has related it in *The Earthly Paradise.* Cf. Gayley's *Classic Myths.*

387. **Substance or the shadow.** Cf. I. 9.

388. **Malison.** A French form of the Latin derivative *malediction*, like *benison* for *benediction*; used in 'romantic' writing.

391. **Substance.** A pun like **coat,** 394?

394. **Three castles.** Cf. I. 78.

For dear are those three castles to my wants, 395
And dear is sister Psyche to my heart,
And two dear things are one of double worth;
And much I might have said, but that my zone
Unmanned me; then the Doctors! O to hear
The Doctors! O to watch the thirsty plants 400
Imbibing! once or twice I thought to roar,
To break my chain, to shake my mane; but thou
Modulate me, soul of mincing mimicry!
Make liquid treble of that bassoon, my throat;
Abase those eyes that ever loved to meet 405
Star-sisters answering under crescent brows;
Abate the stride which speaks of man, and loose
A flying charm of blushes o'er this cheek,
Where they like swallows coming out of time
Will wonder why they came; but hark the bell 410
For dinner, let us go!'
And in we streamed
Among the columns, pacing staid and still
By twos and threes, till all from end to end
With beauties every shade of brown and fair,
In colors gayer than the morning mist, 415
The long hall glittered like a bed of flowers.
How might a man not wander from his wits
Pierced thro' with eyes, but that I kept mine own
Intent on her who, rapt in glorious dreams,

399. **Unmanned.** Another pun. — **Doctors.** Cf. 354.
402–3. See p. xli.
403 ff. Cf. the answering passage in *A. Y. L.* I. iii. 117 ff.
404. **Treble.** Cf. IV. 70.
411. **Dinner.** Does this help to characterize Cyril?
415. **Colors.** What were the two colors of the respective sides? Cf. 3–4 and 303. How would they look when placed together in masses?
419. **Her.** Recall how she looked, 20-27.

The second-sight of some Astræan age, 420
Sat compassed with Professors; they, the while,
Discussed a doubt and tossed it to and fro;
A clamor thickened, mixed with inmost terms
Of art and science; Lady Blanche alone,
Of faded form and haughtiest lineaments, 425
With all her autumn tresses falsely brown,
Shot sidelong daggers at us, a tiger-cat
In act to spring.
At last a solemn grace
Concluded, and we sought the gardens; there
One walked reciting by herself, and one 430
In this hand held a volume as to read,
And smoothed a petted peacock down with that.
Some to a low song oared a shallop by,
Or under arches of the marble bridge

420. **Astræan age.** Rolfe comments: 'According to the old myth, Astræa was the last of the deities to leave the earth in the Iron Age, and it was believed that she would be the first to come back at the return of the Golden Age. Cf. Virgil, *Eclogue* IV. 6: 'Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna.' See also Milton, *Hymn on Nativity* 133:

> For if such holy song
> Enwrap our fancy long,
> Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold.
> . . . . . .
> Yea, Truth and Justice then
> Will down return to men, etc.

and Pope, *Messiah:*

> All crimes shall cease, and ancient fraud shall fail,
> Returning Justice lift aloft her scale, etc.'

424. **Lady Blanche.** Contrast her in detail with Lady Psyche.
431. **As to read.** Why as?
433. **Oared.** Cf. IV. 165. Better than *rowed?*
434. **Marble bridge.** Notice how, one by one, details are added.

Hung, shadowed from the heat; some hid and sought 435
In the orange thickets; others tossed a ball
Above the fountain-jets, and back again
With laughter; others lay about the lawns—
Of the older sort — and murmured that their May
Was passing; what was learning unto them? 440
They wished to marry; they could rule a house;
Men hated learned women; — but we three
Sat muffled like the Fates; and often came
Melissa, hitting all we saw with shafts
Of gentle satire, kin to charity, 445
That harmed not. Then day drooped; the chapel bells
Called us; we left the walks; we mixed with those
Six hundred maidens clad in purest white,
Before two streams of light from wall to wall,
While the great organ almost burst his pipes, 450
Groaning for power, and rolling thro' the court
A long melodious thunder to the sound

439. **Murmured.** Nature again?

442. **Men hated.** Do they? and, if so, why?

443. **Muffled.** Cf. 337 ff.

448. **Purest white.** How do you explain this, in the light of 415? Tennyson, in a letter to Rolfe, dated Oct. 12, 1884, says: 'They were in white at chapel, as we Cantabs were at our Trinity College Chapel in Cambridge.' Memorize the wonderful lines 448–455, wonderful for their sound, and for the exalted mood which they induce.

449. How do there come to be 'two streams of light *from wall to wall*'? What sort of architecture do you imagine? Have we 'storied windows richly dight'?

452. **Melodious thunder.** Cf. *In Memoriam* LXXXVII. 5–8:

> And heard once more in college fanes
> The storm their high-built organs make,
> And thunder-music, rolling, shake
> The prophet blazoned on the panes.

451–3. See p. xlii.

Of solemn psalms and silver litanies,
The work of Ida, to call down from Heaven
A blessing on her labors for the world. 455

454. The work of Ida. A new prayer-book and hymnal?

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
  Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
  Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
  Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
  Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
  Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
  Under the silver moon:
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

Collins notes: 'In the song with its burden . . . we have, of course, a reminiscence of Alcmena's lullaby in Theocritus XXIV. 7–9: . . . "Sleep, my little one, a sweet and lightsome sleep. Sleep, soul of mine."'

In l. 6, the epithet was originally 'dropping.'

III.

MORN in the white wake of the morning star
Came furrowing all the orient into gold.
We rose, and each by other dressed with care,

1–2. Memorize. Cf. *Love and Duty* 95–98:

> Then when the first low matin-chirp hath grown
> Full quire, and morning driven her plow of pearl,
> Far furrowing into light the mounded rack,
> Beyond the fair green field and Eastern sea.

Collins (p. 58) compares Greene's *Orlando Furioso* I. iii.:

> Seest thou not Lycaon's son,
> The hardy plough-swain unto mighty Jove,
> Hath traced his silver *furrows* in the heavens?

The suggestion seems ultimately to come from Apollonius Rhodius. Speaking of a meteor, he says (IV. 296): 'For before them went a trail (*lit.* furrow) of heavenly radiance, where they might pass.' Cf. III. 141, and *The Princess* VII. 170. He is imitated by Virgil, *Æn.* II. 697–8:

> Tum longo limite *sulcus*
> Dat lucem.
> ('Then in a long line its *furrow* sheds a gleam.')

Virgil, in turn, is imitated by Lucan (V. 562) and Valerius Flaccus (I. 568). The immediate original for the moderns is perhaps Claudian, *Cons. Prob. et Olymp.* 102:

> Cursu rotarum
> Saucia clarescunt nubila *sulco.*

The resemblance of the ripple made by a moving vessel to furrows had, of course, been noted by the ancients: Ap. Rh. I. 1167; Virgil, *Æn.* V. 142, 158; Ovid, etc. See **wake, 1.**

Wallace comments on these two lines: 'The word-painting in these two lines is, as are all Tennyson's descriptions of natural phenomena, as faultless in truth as in form — first Venus, then an expanse of pale sky, gradually suffused with a golden tint, till the ridges of full glorious color take form as the sun comes up.'

3. Dressed with care. Imagine the anxious fussing.

Descended to the court, that lay three parts
In shadow, but the Muses' heads were touched, 5
Above the darkness, from their native East.

There, while we stood beside the fount, and watched
Or seemed to watch the dancing bubble, approached
Melissa, tinged with wan from lack of sleep,
Or grief, and glowing round her dewy eyes 10
The circled Iris of a night of tears;
And 'Fly,' she cried, 'O fly, while yet you may!
My mother knows;' and when I asked her 'How?'
'My fault' she wept 'my fault! and yet not mine;
Yet mine in part. O hear me, pardon me. 15
My mother, 'tis her wont from night to night
To rail at Lady Psyche and her side.
She says the Princess should have been the Head,
Herself and Lady Psyche the two arms;
And so it was agreed when first they came; 20
But Lady Psyche was the right hand now,
And she the left, or not or seldom used;
Hers more than half the students, all the love.
And so last night she fell to canvass you:
Her countrywomen! she did not envy her. 25
"Who ever saw such wild barbarians?
Girls? — more like men!" and at these words the snake,

4. **Parts.** Quarters.
6. **Native East.** Explain.
8. See p. xlii.
11. **Circled Iris.** Of what hue or hues? 'Glowing,' we are told; and that seems to forbid the suspicion of dark rings. Red? Hardly, for the rainbow is multi-colored. And how **round** her dewy eyes? At most, *below* them, one would think. Were Tennyson not so often at once exact and felicitous, there would be little point in raising such scruples.
26. **Barbarians.** Cf. II. 278; IV. 516.
27. **More like men.** Cf. II. 427.

My secret, seemed to stir within my breast;
And oh, Sirs, could I help it? but my cheek
Began to burn and burn, and her lynx eye 30
To fix and make me hotter, till she laughed:
"O marvelously modest maiden, you!
Men! girls like men! why, if they had been men
You need not set your thoughts in rubric thus
For wholesale comment." Pardon, I am shamed 35
That I must needs repeat for my excuse
What looks so little graceful; "Men" (for still
My mother went revolving on the word),
"And so they are, — very like men indeed, —
And with that woman closeted for hours!" 40
Then came these dreadful words out one by one,
"Why — these — *are* — men;" I shuddered; "and
you know it."
"O ask me nothing," I said; "And she knows too,
And she conceals it." So my mother clutched
The truth at once, but with no word from me; 45
And now thus early risen she goes to inform
The Princess; Lady Psyche will be crushed;
But you may yet be saved, and therefore fly;
But heal me with your pardon ere you go.'

'What pardon, sweet Melissa, for a blush?' 50
Said Cyril: 'Pale one, blush again; than wear
Those lilies, better blush our lives away.
Yet let us breathe for one hour more in Heaven,'
He added, 'lest some classic angel speak
In scorn of us, "They mounted, Ganymedes, 55

34. **Rubric.** Explain the allusion.
55. **Ganymedes.** Cf. *The Palace of Art:*

> Or else flushed Ganymede, his rosy thigh
> Half-buried in the Eagle's down,
> Sole as a flying star shot through the sky,
> Above the pillared town.

To tumble, Vulcans, on the second morn."
But I will melt this marble into wax
To yield us farther furlough;' and he went.

Melissa shook her doubtful curls, and thought
He scarce would prosper. 'Tell us,' Florian asked, 60
'How grew this feud betwixt the right and left.'
'O long ago,' she said, 'betwixt these two
Division smolders hidden; 't is my mother
Too jealous, often fretful as the wind
Pent in a crevice; much I bear with her; 65
I never knew my father, but she says
(God help her) she was wedded to a fool;
And still she railed against the state of things.
She had the care of Lady Ida's youth,
And from the Queen's decease she brought her up. 70
But when your sister came she won the heart
Of Ida; they were still together, grew
(For so they said themselves) inosculated;
Consonant chords that shiver to one note;

56. **Vulcans.** Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost* I. 740–6.

59. **Doubtful.** Collins (p. 16) calls attention to the Virgilian peculiarity suggested by this epithet. It is not the curls that are doubtful, but Melissa. Cf. **level**, IV. 12.

61. **Right and left.** Cf. 19. Cf. these terms as used in legislative assemblies.

64. **Jealous.** Nature again.

68. **Still.** Meaning? Cf. I. 56.

69. Cf. VI. 217 ff.

73. **Inosculated.** 'Blent together into one. The word is generally used in special derivative application to the case of veins and other vessels that have been made to run into one another, but here there is no doubt a closer reference to the etymology of the word, which is derived from the Latin *osculor*, 'to kiss,' and thus signifies primarily unity through affection' (Wallace).

74. Collins compares Izaak Walton's *Life of Donne:* 'It is most certain that two lutes being both strung and tuned to an equal pitch,

One mind in all things; yet my mother still 75
Affirms your Psyche thieved her theories,
And angled with them for her pupil's love;
She calls her plagiarist; I know not what;
But I must go; I dare not tarry,' and light
As flies the shadow of a bird, she fled. 80

Then murmured Florian, gazing after her,
'An open-hearted maiden, true and pure.
If I could love, why this were she; how pretty
Her blushing was, and how she blushed again,
As if to close with Cyril's random wish; 85
Not like your Princess crammed with erring pride,
Nor like poor Psyche whom she drags in tow.'

'The crane,' I said, 'may chatter of the crane,
The dove may murmur of the dove, but I,
An eagle, clang an eagle to the sphere. 90
My princess, O my princess! — True, she errs,
But in her own grand way; being herself

and then one being played upon, the other that is not touched, being laid upon a table at a fit distance, will, like an echo to a trumpet, warble a faint, audible harmony in answer to the same tune.' But I cannot say that I understand the line, though the illustration is clear in its reference.

77. **Angled.** In a Shakespearian sense.

80. Notice the simile.

81. **Florian.** Why does he speak when Melissa is gone, while Cyril pays her a direct compliment (51–53)?

85. **Random wish.** Cf. 51.

88–90. Collins compares Theocritus, *Idyll* IX. 31: 'Cicala is dear to cicala, and ant to ant, and hawks to hawks, but to me the Muse and song.' He adds *Idyll* X. 30–31, and Virgil, *Ecl.* II. 63–64.

90. **Clang.** Cf. IV. 415, and the use of **grate,** IV. 107. Wallace renders: 'Celebrate in lordly ringing song, as contrasted with the harsh cry of the crane and the gentle one of the dove.' It is safe

Three times more noble than three score of men,
She sees herself in every woman else;
And so she wears her error like a crown 95
To blind the truth and me; for her, and her,
Hebes are they to hand ambrosia, mix
The nectar; but — ah she! — whene'er she moves
The Samian Herè rises, and she speaks
A Memnon smitten with the morning sun.' 100

So saying, from the court we paced, and gained
The terrace ranged along the Northern front,
And leaning there on those balusters, high
Above the empurpled champaign, drank the gale

to say that no similar use of the word can be found in English. — **Sphere.** Cf. *Arabian Nights* 89:

> Dark-blue the deep *sphere* overhead,
> Distinct with vivid stars inlaid;

and *Ode to Memory* 40:

> Sure she was higher to heaven's *spheres.*

94. Would it have been better if she had not?

97. **Hebes.** *Il.* IV. 1–3: 'Now the gods sat by Zeus and held assembly on the golden floor, and in the midst the lady Hebe poured them their nectar; they with golden goblets pledged one another.'

99. **Samian Herè.** The Juno of Samos; cf. *Æn.* I. 16. See also II. 21 ff.

100. A colossal statue near Thebes in Egypt, the stone of which is said, when reached by the rays of the rising sun, to have given forth a sound resembling that of a breaking chord (Pausanias I. 42. § 2). Cf. *Palace of Art* 171–2.

103. **Balusters.** Pronounce.

104. **Empurpled.** Hallam Tennyson explains: 'Blue in the distance' (Wallace). Cf. VI. 179; *In Memoriam* XXXVIII. 3. On the other hand, see VII. 187, where it means 'red.' — **Champaign.** Clear, level landscape.

104–7. **Drank . . . eyelids.** Dawson compares Shelley, *Epipsychidion* 446–9.

That, blown about the foliage underneath, 105
And sated with the innumerable rose,
Beat balm upon our eyelids. Hither came
Cyril, and yawning, 'O hard task,' he cried,
'No fighting shadows here! I forced a way
Thro' solid opposition, crabbed and gnarled. 110
Better to clear prime forests, heave and thump
A league of street in summer solstice down,
Than hammer at this reverend gentlewoman.
I knocked and, bidden, entered; found her there
At point to move, and settled in her eyes 115
The green malignant light of coming storm.
Sir, I was courteous, every phrase well-oiled
As man's could be; yet maiden-meek I prayed
Concealment; she demanded who we were,
And why we came? I fabled nothing fair, 120
But, your example pilot, told her all.
Up went the hushed amaze of hand and eye.
But when I dwelt upon your old affiance,
She answered sharply that I talked astray.
I urged the fierce inscription on the gate, 125
And our three lives. True — we had limed ourselves

106. **Innumerable.** Cf. V. 13, and *The Brook* 134.

109. **Fighting shadows.** Cf. I. 10.

111. **Prime.** Primeval.

112. **Summer solstice.** When?

116. **Green malignant light.** Collins refers to Homer's use of γλαυκιόων (*Il.* XX. 172), and says: 'It is the peculiar whity green glint flashing from the eye of an enraged animal — lion, tiger, cat, or pard — and Tennyson exactly expresses its meaning.'

122. See p. xxiii.

126. **Limed.** 'The metaphor is from the use of bird-lime, a sticky substance which, smeared upon branches, holds fast birds that settle thereon. Cf. Shakespeare, *Hamlet* III. iii. 68–69:

> O limed soul, that struggling to be free
> Art more engaged!' (Wallace).

With open eyes, and we must take the chance.
But such extremes, I told her, well might harm
The woman's cause. "Not more than now," she said,
"So puddled as it is with favoritism." 130
I tried the mother's heart. Shame might befall
Melissa, knowing, saying not she knew;
Her answer was "Leave me to deal with that."
I spoke of war to come, and many deaths,
And she replied, her duty was to speak, 135
And duty duty, clear of consequences.
I grew discouraged, Sir; but since I knew
No rock so hard but that a little wave
May beat admission in a thousand years,
I recommenced: "Decide not ere you pause. 140
I find you here but in the second place,
Some say the third — the authentic foundress you.
I offer boldly — we will seat you highest;
Wink at our advent; help my prince to gain
His rightful bride, and here I promise you 145
Some palace in our land, where you shall reign
The head and heart of all our fair she-world,
And your great name flow on with broadening time
For ever." Well, she balanced this a little,
And told me she would answer us to-day, 150
Meantime be mute; thus much, nor more, I gained.'

128. **Extremes.** Cf. *Of Old sat Freedom:*

> Turning to scorn with lips divine
> The falsehood of extremes.

136. Cf. *Œnone* 147–8:

> And, because right is right, to follow right
> Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.

147. **Head and heart.** Cf. V. 439.
148. Cf. II. 31–2.
149. Contrast the arguments by which Psyche and Blanche are won.

He ceasing, came a message from the Head.
'That afternoon the Princess rode to take
The dip of certain strata to the North.
Would we go with her? we should find the land 155
Worth seeing; and the river made a fall
Out yonder;' then she pointed on to where
A double hill ran up his furrowy forks
Beyond the thick-leaved platans of the vale.

Agreed to, this, the day fled on thro' all 160
Its range of duties to the appointed hour.
Then summoned to the porch we went. She stood
Among her maidens, higher by the head,
Her back against a pillar, her foot on one
Of those tame leopards. Kittenlike he rolled 165
And pawed about her sandal. I drew near;
I gazed. On a sudden my strange seizure came
Upon me, the weird vision of our house;
The Princess Ida seemed a hollow show,
Her gay-furred cats a painted fantasy, 170
Her college and her maidens empty masks,
And I myself the shadow of a dream;
For all things were and were not. Yet I felt
My heart beat thick with passion and with awe;
Then from my breast the involuntary sigh 175
Brake, as she smote me with the light of eyes

154. **Dip.** Inclination to the horizon.

158. **Furrowy forks.** Explain.

159. **Thick-leaved platans.** Literally from Moschus V. 11 (Collins).

163. **Higher by the head.** Cf. 99; II. 27.

165. **Leopards.** Cf. II. 19.

167. **Seizure.** Cf. I. 14, 81. Is this anything more than love-passion? Cf. 173–8, 'Yet . . . pulses.'

172. **Shadow of a dream.** Cf. I. 18.

That lent my knee desire to kneel, and shook
My pulses, till to horse we got, and so
Went forth in long retinue, following up
The river as it narrowed to the hills. 180

I rode beside her, and to me she said:
'O friend, we trust that you esteemed us not
Too harsh to your companion yestermorn;
Unwillingly we spake.' 'No — not to her,'
I answered, 'but to one of whom we spake 185
Your Highness might have seemed the thing you say.'
'Again?' she cried, 'are you ambassadresses
From him to me? We give you, being strange,
A license; speak, and let the topic die.'

I stammered that I knew him — could have wished — 190
'Our king expects — was there no precontract?
There is no truer-hearted — ah, you seem
All he prefigured, and he could not see
The bird of passage flying south but longed
To follow; surely, if Your Highness keep 195
Your purport, you will shock him even to death,
Or baser courses, children of despair.'

'Poor boy,' she said, 'can he not read — no books?
Quoit, tennis, ball — no games? nor deals in that
Which men delight in, martial exercise? 200
To nurse a blind ideal like a girl,
Methinks he seems no better than a girl,
As girls were once, — as we ourself have been;

179. **Retinue.** Pronounce.
183. **Yestermorn.** Cf. II. 39 ff.
189. Is this curiosity — nature? Cf. II. 35.
190. **Stammered.** Why?
194. **South.** Cf. IV. 71, 75.
203. **As we ourself have been.** Cf. VII. 227.

We had our dreams; perhaps he mixed with them;
We touch on our dead self, nor shun to do it, 205
Being other — since we learnt our meaning here:
To lift the woman's fallen divinity
Upon an even pedestal with man.'

She paused, and added with a haughtier smile,
'And as to precontracts, we move, my friend, 210
At no man's beck, but know ourself — and thee,
O Vashti, noble Vashti! Summoned out
She kept her state, and left the drunken king
To brawl at Shushan underneath the palms.'

'Alas, your Highness breathes full East,' I said, 215
'On that which leans to you. I know the Prince,
I prize his truth: and then how vast a work
To assail this gray preëminence of man!
You grant me license; might I use it? Think;
Ere half be done perchance your life may fail; 220
Then comes the feebler heiress of your plan,
And takes and ruins all; and thus your pains
May only make that footprint upon sand
Which old-recurring waves of prejudice

208. Even pedestal. Cf. II. 130.

212. Vashti. Cf. Esther, Chap. 1.

215. Dawson explains: 'Referring to the dry unpleasant east winds prevalent in England.' Wallace says: 'For the metaphor (which may have been *suggested* by the preceding reference to a proud and defiant Oriental queen, but which is *derived* from the bitter and blasting character of the east wind in England) cf. *Audley Court* 51–53:

> I wooed a woman once,
> But she was sharper than an eastern wind,
> And all my heart turned from her.'

218. Gray. Ancient.

230. Savage. Cf. 26.

Resmooth to nothing: might I dread that you, 225
With only Fame for spouse and your great deeds
For issue, yet may live in vain, and miss,
Meanwhile, what every woman counts her due,
Love, children, happiness?'
And she exclaimed,
'Peace, you young savage of the Northern wild! 230
What tho' your Prince's love were like a God's,
Have we not made ourself the sacrifice?
You are bold indeed; we are not talked to thus;
Yet will we say for children, would they grew
Like field-flowers everywhere! we like them well; 235
But children die; and let me tell you, girl,
Howe'er you babble, great deeds cannot die;
They with the sun and moon renew their light
For ever, blessing those that look on them.
Children — that men may pluck them from our hearts, 240
Kill us with pity, break us with ourselves —
O — children — there is nothing upon earth
More miserable than she that has a son
And sees him err! Nor would we work for fame;
Tho' she perhaps might reap the applause of Great, 245
Who learns the one POU STO whence after-hands
May move the world, tho' she herself effect
But little; wherefore up and act, nor shrink
For fear our solid aim be dissipated
By frail successors. Would, indeed, we had been, 250
In lieu of many mortal flies, a race

232. **The sacrifice.** Then it *was* a sacrifice!

246. **Pou sto.** 'The Princess is quoting the celebrated saying of Archimedes to King Hiero. That philosopher was a master of all the arts of applied mechanics, and, dwelling on the enormous mechanical powers of the lever, he exclaimed, "Give me *where I may stand* (pou sto), and I will move the world"' (Dawson).

251. **Flies.** Cf. *In Memoriam* L. 10.

Of giants living each a thousand years,
That we might see our own work out, and watch
The sandy footprint harden into stone.'

I answered nothing, doubtful in myself 255
If that strange Poet-princess, with her grand
Imaginations, might at all be won.
And she broke out, interpreting my thoughts:

'No doubt we seem a kind of monster to you;
We are used to that; for women, up till this 260
Cramped under worse than South-sea-isle taboo,
Dwarfs of the gynæceum, fail so far
In high desire, they know not, cannot guess
How much their welfare is a passion to us.
If we could give them surer, quicker proof — 265
O if our end were less achievable
By slow approaches than by single act
Of immolation, any phase of death,
We were as prompt to spring against the pikes,
Or down the fiery gulf, as talk of it, 270
To compass our dear sisters' liberties.'

254. Sandy footprint. Cf. 223.

261. Taboo. 'The word was brought home by Captain Cook's expedition. The South Sea islands were under the domination of a priesthood, which reserved to its own use anything which any of the members of its class might fancy, by marking it and calling it *taboo*, or devoted to religious uses' (Dawson).

262. Gynæceum. The part of a Greek house reserved for the women, usually the rear.

269–270. Wallace says: 'The two forms here mentioned were probably suggested by two legends of ancient Rome: (1) In the Latin War (B.C. 340) Publius Decius Mus, one of the Roman generals, sacrificed himself on the spears of the enemy in order to secure the victory to his army, it having been revealed to him in a vision from Heaven that one army was doomed and the general of the other (a somewhat similar act of devotion is recorded of Arnold von

She bowed as if to veil a noble tear;
And up we came to where the river sloped
To plunge in cataract, shattering on black blocks
A breadth of thunder. O'er it shook the woods, 275
And danced the color, and, below, stuck out
The bones of some vast bulk that lived and roared
Before man was. She gazed awhile and said,
'As these rude bones to us, are we to her
That will be.' 'Dare we dream of that,' I asked, 280
'Which wrought us, as the workman and his work,
That practice betters?' 'How,' she cried, 'you love

Winkelried in the battle of Sempach, 1388, during the Swiss struggle for independence against the Austrians; this hero, seeing that the Austrian line of spears was impregnable, gathered into his breast as many as he could, and falling upon them created a gap into which his comrades poured); (2) A chasm having appeared in the market-place of Rome, and the priests having declared that this would not close up until there had been cast into it the chief element of Rome's greatness, a young noble named Marcus Curtius, thinking that this condition would best be fulfilled by the sacrifice of one of her sons, leapt into it on horseback and in full armor (B.C. 362).'

274. See p. xlii.

Hadley says (p. 321) that these words 'address themselves at once to mind and sense.'

275. Shook the woods. Hallam Tennyson explains: 'In the wind made by the cataract' (Wallace).

276. Color. Explain. Cf. *Palace of Art* 35–6, 43.

277. Cf. Prol. 15.

282. That practice betters. Knowles says (*Nineteenth Century* XXXIII. 169): 'He inclined somewhat to the theory of a Demiurge, with whom alone man comes into direct contact, saying that this was perhaps "the nearest explanation of the facts of the world which we can get"; and this he put into the mouth of the King in the *Passing of Arthur*, where he cries:

> O me! for why is all around us here
> As if some lesser God had made the world,
> But had not force to shape it as he would,
> Till the High God behold it from beyond,
> And enter in and make it beautiful?'

The metaphysics! Read and earn our prize,
A golden brooch; beneath an emerald plane
Sits Diotima, teaching him that died 285
Of hemlock; our device; wrought to the life;
She rapt upon her subject, he on her:
For there are schools for all.' 'And yet' I said
'Methinks I have not found among them all
One anatomic.' 'Nay, we thought of that,' 290
She answered, 'but it pleased us not; in truth
We shudder but to dream our maids should ape
Those monstrous males that carve the living hound,
And cram him with the fragments of the grave,
Or in the dark dissolving human heart, 295
And holy secrets of this microcosm,
Dabbling a shameless hand with shameful jest,
Encarnalize their spirits; yet we know
Knowledge is knowledge, and this matter hangs;
Howbeit ourself, foreseeing casualty, 300
Nor willing men should come among us, learnt,
For many weary moons before we came,
This craft of healing. Were you sick, ourself
Would tend upon you. To your question now,
Which touches on the workman and his work. 305
'Let there be light, and there was light;' 't is so;

285. **Diotima.** The instructress of Socrates (Plato, *Symposium*).

288. **Schools.** Departments, courses.

293. **Carve the living hound.** Cf. *In the Children's Hospital* 9–10.

296. **Microcosm.** Explain.

298. **Encarnalize their spirits.** Is this true of medical students generally?

299. **Hangs.** Is not yet finally decided.

303. Cf. VII. 76 ff.

306–313. Is this a satisfactory answer to the question in 280–2? Think it out, if you can; if not, no matter. Look up Dawson's comment on p. xxxii.

306. Gen. I. 3.

For was, and is, and will be, are but is;
And all creation is one act at once,
The birth of light; but we that are not all,
As parts, can see but parts, now this, now that, 310
And live, perforce, from thought to thought, and make
One act a phantom of succession; thus
Our weakness somehow shapes the shadow, Time;
But in the shadow will we work, and mold
The woman to the fuller day.'
She spake 315
With kindled eyes; we rode a league beyond,
And, o'er a bridge of pinewood crossing, came
On flowery levels underneath the crag,
Full of all beauty. 'O how sweet,' I said,
(For I was half-oblivious of my mask), 320
'To linger here with one that loved us.' 'Yea,'
She answered, 'or with fair philosophies
That lift the fancy; for indeed these fields
Are lovely, lovelier not the Elysian lawns,

322. **Fair philosophies.** One is reminded of the fine passage in Coleridge's translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein* (Part I. Act II. Sc. iv):

> The intelligible forms of ancient poets,
> The *fair humanities* of old religion,
> The power, the beauty, and the majesty
> That had their haunts in dale or piny mountain,
> Or forest by slow stream, or pebbly spring,
> Or chasms or watery depths — all these have vanished;
> They live no longer in the faith of reason.

324. **Elysian lawns.** Cf. Homer, *Od.* IV. 563 ff.

To the suggestion that this meant the plains of Troy, Tennyson replied (in a letter to Rolfe): 'The "Elysian lawns" are the lawns of Elysium, and have nothing to do with Troy — or perhaps they rather refer to the Islands of the Blest' (Pindar, *Olymp.* 2d). The passage from Pindar runs: 'But evenly ever in sunlight, night and day, an unlaborious life the good receive; . . . with the honored of the gods . . . they possess a tearless life. Then whosoever have

Where paced the Demigods of old, and saw 325
The soft white vapor streak the crowned towers
Built to the sun;' then, turning to her maids,
'Pitch our pavilion here upon the sward;
Lay out the viands.' At the word, they raised
A tent of satin, elaborately wrought 330
With fair Corinna's triumph; here she stood,

been of good courage to the abiding steadfast thrice on either side of death, and have refrained their souls from all iniquity, travel the road of Zeus unto the *tower of Kronos;* there round the islands of the blest the Ocean-breezes blow, and golden flowers are glowing, some from the land on trees of splendor, and some the water feedeth, with wreaths whereof they entwine their hands. . . . Peleus and Kadmos are counted of that company; and the mother of Achilles . . . bare thither her son.'

325. **And saw.** This seems to refer to some ancient legend; but what?

326. **Crowned.** This apparently means 'surmounted by battlements or parapets.' But the term and the whole clause, though beautiful, are obscure to my apprehension.

327. **To the sun.** Rolfe explains: 'rising sunward, lofty'; and Wallace: 'rising high into the sky' (comparing VI. 21); but I cannot convince myself that this is the true interpretation, or, if true, that the expression is precisely the best.

329. **Viands.** Cf. Prol. 105.

331. **Fair Corinna's triumph.** Cf. Pausanias IX. 22. § 3: 'Now of Corinna, the only woman who ever wrote poetry in Tanagra, there is a statue in an open place in the city, and in the gymnasium there is a picture showing her with the fillet round her hair which she won at Thebes, when she overcame Pindar in singing; and I think she got the victory partly because she sang not as Pindar did in the Dorian dialect, but so that the Æolians could more easily understand her, and chiefly because she must have been the most beautiful woman of her day, if one may judge from the portrait.'

Gildersleeve says (*Pindar*, p. x): 'Encouraged, perhaps, by Korinna's success, a younger poetess, Myrtis, attempted to cope with Pindar. She was ingloriously defeated, and sharply chidden by Korinna, with the sweet inconsistency of her sex.' Korinna

Engirt with many a florid maiden-cheek,
The woman-conqueror; woman-conquered there
The bearded Victor of ten-thousand hymns,
And all the men mourned at his side; but we 335
Set forth to climb; then, climbing, Cyril kept
With Psyche, with Melissa Florian, I
With mine affianced. Many a little hand
Glanced like a touch of sunshine on the rocks,
Many a light foot shone like a jewel set 340
In the dark crag; and then we turned, we wound
About the cliffs, the copses, out and in,
Hammering and clinking, chattering stony names
Of shale and hornblende, rag and trap and tuff,
Amygdaloid and trachyte, till the sun 345
Grew broader toward his death, and fell, and all
The rosy heights came out above the lawns.

taught Pindar one lesson which Tennyson did not always heed. 'In his first poem,' says Gildersleeve, 'he had neglected to insert myths. Admonished of this omission by Korinna, and remembering that his monitress was herself famous for her handling of the myth, he crowded his next hymn with mythological figures, . . . whereupon she said with a smile, "One ought to sow with the hand, not with the whole sack."'

334. **Bearded Victor.** Pindar (522–442 B.C.).

340. 'Wasteful and ridiculous excess'? It is true that in *Maud* the poet wrote:

> And feet like sunny gems on an English green;

but can you imagine either? Cf. *Maud* I. xxii. 7.

343 ff. Note the imitative sound. — **Stony.** In what two senses? To what century do you refer this excursion?

343–7. See p. xlii.

346. **Broader.** Cf. I. 58. — **And fell.** What time was it at the opening of this Canto?

347. **Lawns.** 'Just before sunrise and just after sunset the highest peaks of hills are bathed in rosy light and stand out clear against the sky, when the lower spurs and valleys are in comparative dark-

ness. For this use of the expression "came out" cf. *Specimen of a Translation of the Iliad in Blank Verse*, 13–14:

> And every height comes out, and jutting peak
> And valley.'
>
> (Wallace.)

Were these more, or less, elevated than the site of the college?

The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story;
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying;
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying;
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying;
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

Dawson says (*Study*, p. 30): 'The theme is a sharp antithesis, arising out of a surface analogy between the echoes of a bugle on a mountain lake, and the influences of soul upon soul through growing distances of time. In the case of the "horns of Elfland" —

They die on yon rich sky,
They faint on hill, or field, or river.

Fainter comes the echo in proportion to the receding distance. But how different with the influences of the soul—

Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And *grow* for ever and for ever.

The stress of meaning is on the word *grow*. The song is evidently one of married love, and the growing echoes reverberate from generation to generation, from grandparent to parent and grandchild. Once more it is unity through the family. In the first song a unity through the past, in the second a unity in the present, and in this a unity for the future.'

Readers of German may like to see the beautiful translation of the second stanza by Strodtmann:

O horche schnell! wie laut und hell,
Nun schwächer, sanfter, ferner klingend;
O, süss und lang von Klipp' und Hang
Die Hörner Elflands, leise singend!
Horch! durch die finstern Schluchten zieht es schallend;
Blas, Horn; antwortet, Echos, hallend, hallend!

See pp. xvii, xix.

IV.

'THERE sinks the nebulous star we call the sun,
If that hypothesis of theirs be sound'
Said Ida; 'let us down and rest;' and we
Down from the lean and wrinkled precipices,
By every coppice-feathered chasm and cleft, 5
Dropt thro' the ambrosial gloom to where below
No bigger than a glow-worm shone the tent,
Lamp-lit from the inner. Once she leaned on me,
Descending; once or twice she lent her hand,
And blissful palpitations in the blood, 10
Stirring a sudden transport, rose and fell.

But when we planted level feet, and dipped
Beneath the satin dome and entered in,
There leaning deep in broidered down we sank
Our elbows; on a tripod in the midst 15
A fragrant flame rose, and before us glowed
Fruit, blossom, viand, amber wine, and gold.

2. **Hypothesis.** Cf. II. 101–3.
4. **Wrinkled precipices.** Cf. III. 158, and *Will* 19–20:

> Sown in a *wrinkle* of the monstrous hill,
> The city sparkles like a grain of salt.

5. **Coppice-feathered.** 'Lightly fringed with foliage. For this use of the verb cf. *Enoch Arden* 67–68:

> Just where the prone edge of the wood began
> To *feather* toward the hollow,

and *The Gardener's Daughter* 46:

> And all about the large lime *feathers* low.'

(Wallace.)

10–11. Cf. III. 173 ff.
17. **Gold.** Cf. Prol. 106.

Then she, 'Let some one sing to us; lightlier move
The minutes fledged with music;' and a maid,
Of those beside her, smote her harp, and sang. 20

'Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more. 25

'Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail
That brings our friends up from the underworld;
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more. 30

'Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more. 35

18. See p. xlii.

19. **Fledged.** Not a very felicitous epithet, if one considers it.—**Maid.** See her name in VI. 298.

21 ff. 'It is difficult to write without enthusiasm of this exquisitely perfect lyric. The rhythm and cadence are so absolutely faultless that the absence of rime is not noticed in reading' (Dawson).

Knowles says (*Nineteenth Century* XXXIII. 170): 'He told me that "Tears, idle tears" was written as an expression of such longings. "It is, in a way, like St. Paul's 'groanings which cannot be uttered.' It was written at Tintern, when the woods were all yellowing with Autumn seen through the ruined windows. It is what I have always felt even from a boy, and what as a boy I called the 'passion of the past.' And it is so always with me now; it is the distance that charms me in the landscape, the picture and the past, and not the immediate to-day in which I move."'

For an elaborate and suggestive comment on this song see Luce, *Handbook*, pp. 250–8.

34. Richard Henry Stoddard pointed out in 1881 (*North American Review* CXXXIII. 97) that this is adapted from Leigh Hunt's *Hero and Leander* (Canto II):

'Dear as remembered kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.' 40

She ended with such passion that the tear
She sang of shook and fell, an erring pearl
Lost in her bosom; but with some disdain
Answered the Princess, 'If indeed there haunt
About the moldered lodges of the Past 45
So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to men,
Well needs it we should cram our ears with wool
And so pace by; but thine are fancies hatched
In silken-folded idleness; nor is it
Wiser to weep a true occasion lost, 50
But trim our sails, and let old bygones be,
While down the streams that float us each and all
To the issue, goes, like glittering bergs of ice,
Throne after throne, and molten on the waste
Becomes a cloud; for all things serve their time 55
Toward that great year of equal mights and rights;

And when the casement, at the dawn of light,
Began to show a square of ghastly white.

36. 'Obviously suggested,' says Collins, 'by Moschus, *Idyll* III. 69–70.' This is: 'But Cypris loves thee far more than the kiss wherewith she kissed the dying Adonis.'

46. See p. xlii.

47. Cram our ears. See the *Odyssey*, Bk. XII.

53–55. Note the beautiful simile.

55. Serve their time. Cf. *Morte d'Arthur* 241–2:

And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

56. Great year. Cf. *The Golden Year:*

Old writers pushed the happy season back—
The more fools they—we forward; dreamers both:
. . . . . .

Nor would I fight with iron laws, in the end
Found golden; let the past be past; let be
Their canceled Babels; tho' the rough kex break
The starred mosaic, and the beard-blown goat 60
Hang on the shaft, and the wild figtree split
Their monstrous idols, care not while we hear
A trumpet in the distance pealing news
Of better, and Hope, a poising eagle, burns

But well I know
That unto him who works, and feels he works,
This same grand year is ever at the doors.

—**Equal.** Cf. I. 130; VII. 283 ff.

59. **Canceled Babels.** Cf. Gen. 11. 1–9. — **Kex.** Hemlock.

60. **Mosaic.** Inlaid pavement. — **Beard-blown goat.** See Tennyson's rèmark on p. xi.

61. **Wild fig-tree.** Dawson says: 'The rending power of the wild fig-tree — *Caprificus* — was a trite theme of Roman poets. Martial (X. 2) thinks his fame will last through his writings, while the wild fig splits the monument of Messala:

Marmora Messalæ findit caprificus.

In Horace (*Ep.* V. 17) Canidia makes use of fig-trees plucked from tombs:

Jubet sepulcris caprificos erutas.

Juvenal (X. 147), speaking of the vanity of ambition, says:

Vain rage — the roots of the wild fig-tree rise,
Strike through the marble, and their memory dies.

Ramage, in his *Nooks and By-ways of Italy* (p. 69), is reminded of this passage by noticing a wild fig springing out of and splitting a rock in the Apennines.'

64. **Burns.** Lowell has thus expressed the same poetic idea (*Above and Below*):

Lone watcher on the mountain-height!
It is right precious to behold
The first long surf of climbing light
Flood all the thirsty East with gold;
But we, who in the shadow sit,
Know also when the day is nigh,
Seeing thy shining forehead lit
With his inspiring prophecy.

Above the unrisen morrow;' then to me, 65
'Know you no song of your own land,' she said,
'Not such as moans about the retrospect,
But deals with the other distance, and the hues
Of promise; not a death's-head at the wine?'

Then I remembered one myself had made, 70
What time I watched the swallow winging south
From mine own land, part made long since, and part
Now while I sang; and maidenlike as far
As I could ape their treble, did I sing.

'O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying South, 75
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

But Schiller had already said, in one of his letters (No. 9, ed. Hempel): 'Before truth sends its triumphant light into the depths of the heart, poesy catches the rays, and the summits of humanity shine with brightness while a damp night is still resting upon the valleys.'

66. Know you? *We* do; who wrote it?

Let the dead past bury its dead;
Act, act in the living present,
Heart within and God o'erhead.

69. Death's-head. Cf. Herodotus I. 78: 'At their convivial banquets, among the wealthy classes [of the Egyptians], when they have finished supper, a man carries round in a coffin the image of a dead body carved in wood, made as like as possible in color and workmanship, and in size generally about one or two cubits in length; and showing this to each of the company, he says, "Look upon this, then drink and enjoy yourself; for when dead you will be like this."'

71. What time. From Milton? See my note in *Paradise Lost, Books I and II* (on I. 36). — **Swallow.** Cf. III. 194.

75 ff. Stedman remarks (p. 220): 'The Swallow Song . . . is modeled upon the isometric songs in the third and eleventh idyls of Theocritus, bearing a special likeness to the lover's serenade in *Idyl* III., as divided by Ahrens and others into stanzas of three verses each.'

'O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,
And dark and true and tender is the North. 80

'O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow, and light
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

'O were I thou that she might take me in,
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart 85
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

'Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love,
Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are green?

'O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown; 90
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is made.

'O tell her, brief is life but love is long,
And brief the sun of summer in the North,
And brief the moon of beauty in the South. 95

'O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make her mine,
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.'

81. Bristed says of the versification (*Amer. Rev.* VIII. 37): 'Much of the versification is on the Italian model. Now this may be a perfectly proper innovation. It is possible that

O Swallow, Swallow‿if I could follow‿and light

is as natural and suitable a line in the one language as

Molto‿egli‿opro con senno‿e con la mano

is in the other.'

84–86. Dawson compares Shakespeare, *Venus and Adonis* 1185–6:

Lo! in this hollow cradle take thy rest;
My throbbing heart shall rock thee day and night.

97. Scan.

I ceased, and all the ladies, each at each,
Like the Ithacensian suitors in old time, 100
Stared with great eyes, and laughed with alien lips,
And knew not what they meant; for still my voice
Rang false; but smiling, 'Not for thee,' she said,
'O Bulbul, any rose of Gulistan
Shall burst her veil; marsh-divers, rather, maid, 105
Shall croak thee sister, or the meadow-crake
Grate her harsh kindred in the grass; and this
A mere love-poem! O for such, my friend,
We hold them slight; they mind us of the time
When we made bricks in Egypt. Knaves are men, 110
That lute and flute fantastic tenderness,
And dress the victim to the offering up.
And paint the gates of Hell with Paradise,

101. **Laughed with alien lips.** 'The reference is to the *Odyssey*, XX. 347. The suitors at the court of Penelope feel the occult influence of the unseen goddess, Pallas, causing their thoughts to wander. They fail to recognize Ulysses in his disguise, and their laughter is constrained and unnatural, they know not why. They *laugh with alien lips*, which is the nearest possible poetical translation of the Greek idiomatic expression, "They laughed with other men's *jaws*" [*οἱ δ' ἤδη γναθμοῖσι γελοίων ἀλλοτρίοισιν*]' (Dawson).

104. 'The nightingale is the *Bulbul* in Persia, and Persian poets feign that he is the constant lover of the rose, to whom he pours out his passionate melodies. *Gulistan* is Persian for rose-garden' (Dawson).

106. **Meadow-crake.** 'The corn-crake or land-rail. Says Wood: "The cry of the corn-crake may be exactly imitated by drawing a quill or a piece of stick over the large teeth of a comb, or by rubbing together two jagged strips of bone"' (Dawson).

107. **Grate her harsh kindred.** Apparently to be construed on the analogy of **croak thee sister**; almost as though **grate** were a disagreeable substitute for *greet*. The construction is violent, and almost repugnant to the genius of the language.

110. **Bricks in Egypt.** Cf. Exod. 1. 8–14.

And play the slave to gain the tyranny.
Poor soul! I had a maid of honor once; 115
She wept her true eyes blind for such a one,
A rogue of canzonets and serenades.
I loved her. Peace be with her. She is dead.
So they blaspheme the muse! But great is song
Used to great ends; ourself have often tried 120
Valkyrian hymns, or into rhythm have dashed
The passion of the prophetess; for song
Is duer unto freedom, force, and growth
Of spirit, than to junketing and love.
Love is it? Would this same mock-love, and this 125
Mock-Hymen were laid up like winter bats,
Till all men grew to rate us at our worth,
Not vassals to be beat, nor pretty babes
To be dandled, no, but living wills, and sphered
Whole in ourselves, and owed to none. Enough! 130
But now, to leaven play with profit, you,
Know you no song, the true growth of your soil,
That gives the manners of your countrywomen?'

114. From Horace (*Sat.* II. iii. 72) and Tacitus (*Hist.* I. ch. 36), as Collins notes.

117. **Canzonets.** The word occurs in *Love's Labor's Lost* IV. ii. 124.

121. **Valkyrian.** Martial. 'Such as were sung by the Valkyrs, or Valkyrias, "the choosers of the slain," or fatal sisters of Odin, in the Northern mythology. They were represented as awful and beautiful maidens, who, mounted on swift horses and bearing drawn swords, presided over the field of battle, selecting those destined to death, and conducting them to Valhalla, where they ministered at the feasts of the heroes' (Rolfe). Cf. VI. 17–42.

122. Cf. Miriam's song, Exod. 15. 20.

128–130. See p. xlii.

129. **Living wills.** Cf. I. 47; II. 185; V. 340; VI. 102; VII. 287. Also *Will* 1; *In Memoriam* CXXXI:

O living will that shalt endure.

130. **Owed.** Responsible.

She spoke and turned her sumptuous head, with eyes
Of shining expectation fixed on mine. 135
Then while I dragged my brains for such a song,
Cyril, with whom the bell-mouthed glass had wrought,
Or mastered by the sense of sport, began
To troll a careless, careless tavern-catch
Of Moll and Meg, and strange experiences 140
Unmeet for ladies. Florian nodded at him,
I frowning; Psyche flushed and wanned and shook;
The lilylike Melissa drooped her brows;
'Forbear,' the Princess cried; 'Forbear, Sir' I;
And heated thro' and thro' with wrath and love, 145
I smote him on the breast; he started up;
There rose a shriek as of a city sacked;
Melissa clamored, 'Flee the death;' 'To horse'
Said Ida; 'home! to horse!' and fled, as flies
A troop of snowy doves athwart the dusk, 150
When some one batters at the dovecote-doors,
Disorderly the women. Alone I stood
With Florian, cursing Cyril, vexed at heart,
In the pavilion; there like parting hopes
I heard them passing from me; hoof by hoof, 155
And every hoof a knell to my desires,
Clanged on the bridge; and then another shriek,
'The Head, the Head, the Princess, O the Head!'

134. **Sumptuous.** A felicitous epithet.

140. **Moll and Meg.** Probably Tennyson has in mind *Tempest* II. ii. 48–56.

143. **Lilylike.** Cf. III. 52.

146. Is this the dramatic crisis?

148. **To horse.** Is this the command one would expect?

150. **Doves.** Cf. II. 87.

152. **Disorderly.** Adjective or adverb?

157. See p. xlii.

For blind with rage she missed the plank, and rolled
In the river. Out I sprang from glow to gloom ; 160
There whirled her white robe like a blossomed branch
Rapt to the horrible fall ; a glance I gave,
No more ; but woman-vested as I was
Plunged ; and the flood drew ; yet I caught her ; then
Oaring one arm, and bearing in my left 165
The weight of all the hopes of half the world,
Strove to buffet to land in vain. A tree
Was half-disrooted from his place, and stooped
To drench his dark locks in the gurgling wave
Mid-channel. Right on this we drove and caught, 170
And grasping down the boughs I gained the shore.

There stood her maidens glimmeringly grouped
In the hollow bank. One reaching forward drew
My burthen from mine arms ; they cried 'She lives :'
They bore her back into the tent ; but I, 175
So much a kind of shame within me wrought,
Not yet endured to meet her opening eyes,
Nor found my friends ; but pushed alone on foot

159. **Blind with rage.** Is this in keeping with the character of the woman and the time ?

160–7. See p. xlii.

164. **Plunged.** Cf. *Jul. Cæs.* I. ii. 105.

166. 'Mark the exquisite irony of this line. As though his struggle in the water was rendered the harder by the fact that on the lady rested the fate of this great movement ! This is the true touch of ironical banter. There is a similar passage in the Roman poet Statius, where the baby Apollo is represented as depressing by his divine weight the edge of the island of Delos as he crawls along it. Cf. 531–2' (Wallace).

Statius has been severely criticized for this conceit.

167. **Strove . . . vain.** Hadley says of the rhythm of this line that it 'is admirably adapted to express laborious and unsuccessful effort.' He also praises 164.

169. Is this possibly a reminiscence of *Hamlet* IV. vii. 166 ?

(For since her horse was lost I left her mine)
Across the woods, and less from Indian craft 180
Than beelike instinct hiveward, found at length
The garden portals. Two great statues, Art
And Science, Caryatids, lifted up
A weight of emblem, and betwixt were valves
Of open-work in which the hunter rued 185
His rash intrusion, manlike, but his brows
Had sprouted, and the branches thereupon
Spread out at top, and grimly spiked the gates.

A little space was left between the horns,
Thro' which I clambered o'er at top with pain, 190
Dropped on the sward, and up the linden walks,
And, tossed on thoughts that changed from hue to hue,
Now poring on the glowworm, now the star,
I paced the terrace, till the Bear had wheeled
Thro' a great arc his seven slow suns.

181. **Hiveward.** Cf. II. 84.

183. **Caryatids.** Columns in the form of sculptured female figures, generally with full draperies, used to support an entablature, or the like.

184. **Valves.** The Latin word for double or folding doors (Horace, Juvenal, Ovid, etc.); here = *gates.*

185. 'The allusion is to the hunter Actæon, who, having come upon Diana and her nymphs when bathing, was turned into a stag' (Dawson).

191. See p. xliii. — **Linden walks.** Cf. I. 206.

193. Had he nothing more important to think about?

194. **The Bear.** Considering Tennyson's visualizing power, the following statement by Knowles (*Nineteenth Century* XXXIII. 165) is surprising: 'The shortness of his sight, which was extreme, tormented him always. When he was looking at any object he seemed to be smelling it. He said that he had "never seen the two pointers of the Great Bear except as two intersecting circles, like the first proposition in Euclid."' Tennyson was greatly interested in astronomy.

195. Notice the slow monosyllables. Why **suns?**

A step 195
Of lightest echo, then a loftier form
Than female, moving thro' the uncertain gloom,
Disturbed me with the doubt 'If this were she?'
But it was Florian. 'Hist, O hist,' he said,
'They seek us; out so late is out of rules. 200
Moreover, "Seize the strangers" is the cry.
How came you here?' I told him: 'I,' said he,
'Last of the train, a moral leper, I,
To whom none spake, half-sick at heart, returned.
Arriving all confused among the rest, 205
With hooded brows I crept into the hall,
And, couched behind a Judith, underneath
The head of Holofernes peeped and saw.
Girl after girl was called to trial; each
Disclaimed all knowledge of us; last of all, 210
Melissa; trust me, Sir, I pitied her.
She, questioned if she knew us men, at first
Was silent; closer pressed, denied it not;
And then, demanded if her mother knew,
Or Psyche, she affirmed not, or denied; 215
From whence the Royal mind, familiar with her,
Easily gathered either guilt. She sent
For Psyche, but she was not there; she called
For Psyche's child to cast it from the doors;
She sent for Blanche to accuse her face to face; 220
And I slipped out; but whither will you now?

203. **Moral leper.** Explain.

206. **Hooded brows.** Cf. II. 337.

207. **Judith.** See the Apocryphal book of Judith. Aldrich has a poem on the subject, and the Old English fragment is one of the best specimens of our earlier poetry.

212. **Us men.** Us to be men.

219–220. Is this an admirable heroine? Cf. 159, and see Kingsley's remarks on p. xxvi.

And where are Psyche, Cyril? both are fled;
What if together? That were not so well.
Would rather we had never come! I dread
His wildness, and the chances of the dark.' 225

'And yet,' I said, 'you wrong him more than I
That struck him; this is proper to the clown —
Tho' smocked, or furred and purpled, still the clown —
To harm the thing that trusts him, and to shame
That which he says he loves; for Cyril, howe'er 230
He deal in frolic, as to-night — the song
Might have been worse, and sinned in grosser lips
Beyond all pardon — as it is, I hold
These flashes on the surface are not he.
He has a solid base of temperament; 235
But as the water-lily starts and slides
Upon the level in little puffs of wind,
Tho' anchored to the bottom, such is he.'

Scarce had I ceased when from a tamarisk near
Two proctors leapt upon us, crying, 'Names;' 240

227. **Clown.** Boor, churl.

235. **Temperament.** Natural disposition or constitution; personal characteristics.

236–8. Collins says (*Illustrations*, p. 84): 'This felicitous and picturesque simile is one of Tennyson's many debts to Wordsworth (*Excursion*, Bk. V.):

> A thing
> Subject . . . to vital accidents;
> And, like the water-lily, lives and thrives,
> Whose root is fixed in stable earth, whose head
> Floats on the tossing waters.'

His discovery was first published in *Cornhill* for July, 1880. Tennyson repudiated the insinuation; see p. xxxviii. Dawson had remarked: 'Wordsworth's is the truer picture.'

239–251. Luce (p. 45), after referring to the verbal quibbles in I. 144–5, V. 275, adds: 'From these low beginnings of wit we may

He, standing still, was clutched; but I began
To thrid the musky-circled mazes, wind
And double in and out the boles, and race
By all the fountains; fleet I was of foot;
Before me showered the rose in flakes; behind 245
I heard the puffed pursuer; at mine ear
Bubbled the nightingale and heeded not,
And secret laughter tickled all my soul.
At last I hooked my ankle in a vine
That clasped the feet of a Mnemosyne, 250
And falling on my face was caught and known.

They haled us to the Princess, where she sat
High in the hall; above her drooped a lamp,
And made the single jewel on her brow
Burn like the mystic fire on a mast-head, 255
Prophet of storm. A handmaid on each side

pass to such delicate humor as the following.' To this he would add 189–190, 206–8.

242. Thrid. Thread; to pass through something narrow or tortuous. Cf. *A Dream of Fair Women* 243:

Thridding the sombre boscage of the wood.

—**Musky-circled mazes.** 'Garden-walks with fragrant borders' (Wallace).

243. Boles. Define.

244. Fountains. Cf. I. 215.

245. Rose. Cf. I. 216; III. 106.

246–8. See p. xliii.

250. Mnemosyne. Goddess of memory, and mother of the Muses. In what part of the College were the statues of the Muses?

252. Haled. Cf. Luke 12. 58; Acts 8. 3.

254–6. See p. xliii.

255. Mystic fire. 'When the atmosphere is in a state of electrical tension, brush-shaped or starlike flames are seen on the masts of ships. . . . Mariners call them St. Elmo's fires' (Dawson). Rolfe quotes Longfellow, *The Golden Legend:*

Bowed toward her, combing out her long black hair
Damp from the river; and close behind her stood
Eight daughters of the plow, stronger than men,
Huge women blowzed with health, and wind, and rain, 260
And labor. Each was like a Druid rock;
Or like a spire of land that stands apart
Cleft from the main, and wailed about with mews.

Then, as we came, the crowd dividing clove
An advent to the throne; and therebeside, 265
Half-naked as if caught at once from bed
And tumbled on the purple footcloth, lay
The lily-shining child; and on the left,
Bowed on her palms and folded up from wrong,
Her round white shoulder shaken with her sobs, 270
Melissa knelt; but Lady Blanche erect
Stood up and spake, an affluent orator.

> Last night I saw St. Elmo's stars,
> With their glimmering lanterns, all at play
> On the tops of the masts and the tips of the spars,
> And I knew we should have foul weather to-day.

Cf. *Tiresias* 110–112.

259. Daughters of the plow. Cf. *Aylmer's Field* 723: 'Sons of the glebe.' Such phraseology is Biblical.

See p. xliii.

260. Blowzed. Reddened, made coarse of complexion.

261–3. 'The image is grand,—just a little too grand for a group of female servants, summoned to eject the three masculine intruders from the university' (Van Dyke, *The Poetry of Tennyson*, p. 116).

261. Druid rock. Like the pillars of Stonehenge. See note on Con. 41 ff.

268. Lily-shining. Cf. VI. 176.

270. Round white shoulder. How complete a picture have you of Melissa? Cf. II. 302–6; III. 79–84; IV. 143.

272. Affluent. Fluent, eloquent; at once rich in matter and easy in expression.

'It was not thus, O Princess, in old days;
You prized my counsel, lived upon my lips;
I led you then to all the Castalies; 275
I fed you with the milk of every Muse;
I loved you like this kneeler, and you me
Your second mother; those were gracious times.
Then came your new friend; you began to change—
I saw it and grieved—to slacken and to cool; 280
Till taken with her seeming openness
You turned your warmer currents all to her;
To me you froze; this was my meed for all.
Yet I bore up, in part from ancient love,
And partly that I hoped to win you back, 285
And partly conscious of my own deserts,
And partly that you were my civil head,
And chiefly you were born for something great,
In which I might your fellow-worker be,
When time should serve; and thus a noble scheme 290
Grew up from seed we two long since had sown;
In us true growth, in her a Jonah's gourd,
Up in one night and due to sudden sun.
We took this palace; but even from the first
You stood in your own light and darkened mine. 295
What student came but that you planed her path
To Lady Psyche, younger, not so wise,

275. **Castalies.** 'Sources of inspiration or culture; a pluralizing of *Castalia*, or *Castaly*, the mythical spring on Parnassus, sacred to the Muses' (Rolfe).

280. Cf. *Jul. Cæs.* IV. ii. 15 ff.

282. **Turned . . . currents.** Cf. *Hamlet* III. i. 87.

283. **To me you froze.** How better than **you froze to me,** the reading of the early editions?

284–8. Cf. Prol. 44–47; II. 56–58.

292. **Jonah's gourd.** See Jonah 4. 5–11.

296. **You.** But cf. I. 231. Was it the Princess who thus replied?

A foreigner, and I your countrywoman,
I your old friend and tried, she new in all?
But still her lists were swelled and mine were lean; 300
Yet I bore up in hope she would be known.
Then came these wolves; *they* knew her; *they* endured,
Long-closeted with her the yestermorn,
To tell her what they were, and she to hear;
And me none told; not less to an eye like mine, 305
A lidless watcher of the public weal,
Last night their mask was patent, and my foot
Was to you; but I thought again; I feared
To meet a cold "We thank you, we shall hear of it
From Lady Psyche;" you had gone to her, 310
She told, perforce; and winning easy grace,
No doubt, for slight delay, remained among us
In our young nursery still unknown, the stem
Less grain than touchwood, while my honest heat
Were all miscounted as malignant haste 315
To push my rival out of place and power.
But public use required she should be known;
And since my oath was ta'en for public use,
I broke the letter of it to keep the sense.

298. **Foreigner.** Cf. II. 243 ff.
305. **Eye.** Cf. III. 30. 115; VI. 310.
306. **Lidless.** Cf. Lowell *Rosaline*, st. 2:

> But still the spirit sees and hears, —
> Its eyes are *lidless*, Rosaline.

311. **She told.** She had told, would have told.
313. **Nursery.** Meaning?
314. **Grain.** Cf. V. 517; VI. 34. — **Touchwood.** Cf. *Aylmer's Field* 510–512:

> Once grove-like, each huge arm a tree, but now
> The broken base of a black tower, a cave
> Of *touchwood*, with a single flourishing spray.

I spoke not then at first, but watched them well, 320
Saw that they kept apart, no mischief done;
And yet this day (tho' you should hate me for it)
I came to tell you; found that you had gone,
Ridden to the hills, she likewise; now, I thought,
That surely she will speak; if not, then I; 325
Did she? These monsters blazoned what they were,
According to the coarseness of their kind,
For thus I hear; and known at last (my work)
And full of cowardice and guilty shame —
I grant in her some sense of shame — she flies; 330
And I remain on whom to wreak your rage,
I, that have lent my life to build up yours,
I that have wasted here health, wealth, and time,
And talent, I — you know it — I will not boast;
Dismiss me, and I prophesy your plan, 335
Divorced from my experience, will be chaff
For every gust of chance, and men will say
We did not know the real light, but chased
The wisp that flickers where no foot can tread.'

She ceased; the Princess answered coldly, 'Good; 340
Your oath is broken; we dismiss you; go.
For this lost lamb (she pointed to the child),
Our mind is changed; we take it to ourself.'

339. Cf. III. 140–150. Was Blanche's speech honest? Was it skilfully devised?

340–3. Boynton comments: 'The Princess is admirable in her summary dismissal of Lady Blanche. She shows perfect self-command, and a really royal dignity of decision. But as for her adoption of the child — what shall we say was her principal motive: a mere feeling of compassion for the deserted baby, a natural longing for child-companionship, or a settled purpose to establish by her complaisance a permanent right to Psyche's little daughter, and so to attain her subtlest revenge upon Psyche herself?'

Thereat the Lady stretched a vulture throat,
And shot from crooked lips a haggard smile. 345
'The plan was mine. I built the nest' she said
'To hatch the cuckoo. Rise!' and stooped to updrag
Melissa; she, half on her mother propped,
Half-drooping from her, turned her face, and cast
A liquid look on Ida, full of prayer, 350
Which melted Florian's fancy as she hung,
A Niobëan daughter, one arm out,
Appealing to the bolts of Heaven; and while
We gazed upon her came a little stir
About the doors, and on a sudden rushed 355
Among us, out of breath, as one pursued,
A woman-post in flying raiment. Fear
Stared in her eyes, and chalked her face, and winged
Her transit to the throne, whereby she fell
Delivering sealed dispatches, which the Head 360
Took half-amazed, and in her lion's mood
Tore open, silent we with blind surmise
Regarding while she read, till over brow
And cheek and bosom brake the wrathful bloom
As of some fire against a stormy cloud, 365
When the wild peasant rights himself, the rick

344–5. Luce says (p. 226): 'Of gesture-painting the examples are admirable and abundant,' and adduces this.

345. **Haggard.** When a noun, this word signifies 'hawk'; can it have been suggested by the **vulture** of the preceding line?

347. **Cuckoo.** Explain.

348 ff. Observe how Tennyson chisels a statue.

352. **Niobëan daughter.** One of a famous group of statues at Florence, of which photographs can be readily seen. What is the legend of Niobe?

357. **Woman-post.** Cf. I. 188.

366. **Rick.** About 1830 rick-burning was rife, laborers having in this manner taken vengeance upon their employers for real or imaginary grievances. Cf. *To Mary Boyle:*

Flames, and his anger reddens in the heavens;
For anger most it seemed, while now her breast,
Beaten with some great passion at her heart,
Palpitated, her hand shook, and we heard 370
In the dead hush the papers that she held
Rustle; at once the lost lamb at her feet
Sent out a bitter bleating for its dam;
The plaintive cry jarred on her ire; she crushed
The scrolls together, made a sudden turn 375
As if to speak, but, utterance failing her,
She whirled them on to me, as who should say
'Read,' and I read — two letters — one her sire's.

'Fair daughter, when we sent the Prince your way
We knew not your ungracious laws, which learnt, 380
We, conscious of what temper you are built,
Came all in haste to hinder wrong, but fell
Into his father's hands, who has this night,
You lying close upon his territory,
Slipped round and in the dark invested you; 385
And here he keeps me hostage for his son.'

The second was my father's, running thus:
'You have our son; touch not a hair of his head;

And once — I well remember that red night
When thirty ricks,
All flaming, made an English homestead Hell—
These hands of mine
Have helped to pass a bucket from the well
Along the line.

This was at Somersby, Lincolnshire.

367. See p. xliii.
370–2. See p. xliii.
372. See 342.
377. **As who.** **Who** is an indefinite pronoun.
380. **Which learnt.** Absolute construction.

Render him up unscathed; give him your hand;
Cleave to your contract; tho' indeed we hear 390
You hold the woman is the better man —
A rampant heresy, such as if it spread
Would make all women kick against their lords
Thro' all the world, and which might well deserve
That we this night should pluck your palace down; 395
And we will do it, unless you send us back
Our son, on the instant, whole.'
So far I read;
And then stood up and spoke impetuously.

'O not to pry and peer on your reserve,
But led by golden wishes, and a hope 400
The child of regal compact, did I break
Your precinct; not a scorner of your sex
But venerator, zealous it should be
All that it might be; hear me, for I bear,
Tho' man, yet human, whatsoe'er your wrongs, 405
From the flaxen curl to the gray lock a life
Less mine than yours; my nurse would tell me of you;
I babbled for you, as babies for the moon,
Vague brightness; when a boy, you stooped to me
From all high places, lived in all fair lights, 410
Came in long breezes rapt from inmost south
And blown to inmost north; at eve and dawn
With Ida, Ida, Ida, rang the woods;
The leader wildswan in among the stars
Would clang it, and lapt in wreaths of glowworm light 415

393. **Kick against.** Be recalcitrant towards. Cf. Acts 9. 5.
395. **Pluck . . . down.** So in Shakespeare.
401. **Regal.** The first edition had **legal.** Is this better?
406. **Flaxen curl.** Of what complexion was he?
415. **Clang.** Cf. III. 90, and *The Dying Swan.* — **Glowworm.** Phosphorescent.

The mellow breaker murmured Ida. Now,
Because I would have reached you, had you been
Sphered up with Cassiopëia, or the enthroned
Persephonè in Hades, now at length,
Those winters of abeyance all worn out, 420
A man I came to see you; but, indeed,
Not in this frequence can I lend full tongue,
O noble Ida, to those thoughts that wait
On you, their centre; let me say but this,
That many a famous man and woman, town 425
And landskip, have I heard of, after seen
The dwarfs of presage; tho' when known, there grew
Another kind of beauty in detail
Made them worth knowing; but in you I found
My boyish dream involved and dazzled down 430
And mastered, while that after-beauty makes
Such head from act to act, from hour to hour,
Within me, that except you slay me here,
According to your bitter statute-book,

418–9. 'Cassiopëia was a mythical Queen of Ethiopia, and her name is now given to a constellation near the North Pole Star. With the splendid word **sphered** (= 'set as a star' — the expression occurs also in Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida* I. iii. 90 — of the Sun) we may compare 'starr'd' in the following passage from Milton's *Il Penseroso* 19–21, referring to the same legend:

> That starr'd Ethiop queen that strove
> To set her beauty's praise above
> The sea-nymphs, and their powers offended.

Cf. a parallel use of 'bulked' in V. 142. Persephone was the wife of Hades, King of the Lower World, which is itself known by his name' (Wallace). Cf. Jean Ingelow's *Persephone.*

420. Explain.

422. Frequence. Throng. So in Milton.

426. Landskip. For the unusual spelling cf. p. xxxviii. Elsewhere he has *landscape.*

427. Dwarfs of presage. Explain. Cf. I. 72.

I cannot cease to follow you, as they say 435
The seal does music; who desire you more
Than growing boys their manhood; dying lips,
With many thousand matters left to do,
The breath of life; O more than poor men wealth,
Than sick men health — yours, yours, not mine — but half 440
Without you; with you, whole; and of those halves
You worthiest; and howe'er you block and bar
Your heart with system out from mine, I hold
That it becomes no man to nurse despair,
But in the teeth of clenched antagonisms 445
To follow up the worthiest till he die;
Yet that I came not all unauthorized,
Behold your father's letter.'
On one knee
Kneeling, I gave it, which she caught, and dashed
Unopened at her feet; a tide of fierce 450
Invective seemed to wait behind her lips,
As waits a river level with the dam,
Ready to burst and flood the world with foam;
And so she would have spoken, but there rose
A hubbub in the court of half the maids 455
Gathered together; from the illumined hall
Long lanes of splendor slanted o'er a press
Of snowy shoulders, thick as herded ewes,

436. **The seal does music.** A fact.
437. **Dying lips.** A sort of echo of 33.
440. **Yours.** Elliptical; perhaps we may supply 'I am.'
443. **System.** See VI. 178.
451. **Invective.** More rage!
456. **Illumined.** What time of night was this? Cf. 195, 200, 383, 543. How fond they are of turning night into day! Cf. I. 204.
457. **Long lanes of splendor.** Cf. II. 449. — **Slanted.** What are the relative positions of the hall and the court? Cf. II. 10, 17; IV. 533.
458. **Snowy shoulders.** Were they all in evening dress? Cf. 43, 270, 364. — **Herded ewes.** Cf. VI. 69 ff.

And rainbow robes, and gems and gemlike eyes,
And gold and golden heads; they to and fro 460
Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some red, some pale,
All open-mouthed, all gazing to the light,
Some crying there was an army in the land,
And some that men were in the very walls,
And some they cared not; till a clamor grew 465
As of a new-world Babel, woman-built,
And worse-confounded; high above them stood
The placid marble Muses, looking peace.

Not peace she looked, the Head; but rising up
Robed in the long night of her deep hair, so 470
To the open window moved, remaining there

459. **Rainbow robes.** Of what two colors?

460. **Golden heads.** Cf. Prol. 142.

461. Wallace says: 'This tumultuous disorder is a fine rhetorical effect, expressing and emphasizing the wild panic of the girls. For similar cases of sympathy between sound and sense cf. II. 168–170; IV. 162–7, 195, 370; VI. 69; VII. 210, 230.'

See p. xliii.

466. **Babel.** Cf. 59.

467. **Worse-confounded.** From Milton, *Paradise Lost.* — **High above them.** Had you thought of these Muses as *high?* Cf. II. 13–14.

468. A fine line.

469–476. Cf. Saintsbury, *Corrected Impressions*, pp. 35–36: 'But Tennyson has another secret than this for blank verse. This is the secret of the paragraph, which he alone of all English poets shares with Milton in perfection. There is little doubt that he learnt it from Milton, but the effect is quite different, though the means resorted to are necessarily much the same in both cases, and include in both a very careful and deliberate disposition of the full stop, which breaks and varies the cadence of the line; the adoption, when it is thought necessary, of trisyllabic instead of disyllabic feet; and the arrangement of a whole block of verses so that they lead up to a climax of sense and sound in the final line.'

470. Cf. 257, and I. 38.

Fixed like a beacon-tower above the waves
Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling eye
Glares ruin, and the wild birds on the light
Dash themselves dead. She stretched her arms and called 475
Across the tumult, and the tumult fell.

'What fear ye, brawlers? am not I your Head?
On me, me, me, the storm first breaks; *I* dare
All these male thunderbolts; what is it ye fear?
Peace! there are those to avenge us, and they come; 480
If not, — myself were like enough, O girls,
To unfurl the maiden banner of our rights,
And clad in iron burst the ranks of war,
Or, falling, protomartyr of our cause,

472 ff. 'The same simile occurs in *Enoch Arden:*

> Allured him as the beacon-blaze allures
> The bird of passage, till he madly strikes
> Against it, and beats out his weary life.

The description in the first passage is far more vivid. The lofty tower, the tempest, and the red revolving light intensify the picture. A parallel passage occurs in Longfellow, *The Light-house:*

> The sea-bird wheeling round it, with the din
> Of wings and winds and solitary cries,
> Blinded and maddened by the light within,
> Dashes himself against the glare and dies.'

(Dawson.)

473. **Crimson-rolling.** Should not this be **crimson, rolling?** What does **crimson-rolling** mean?

474. Noel says (*Poetry and Poets*, p. 233): 'The fine comparison of the Princess Ida . . . to a beacon glaring ruin over raging seas . . . seems too grand for the occasion.'

475. See p. xliii.

475-6. **She . . . fell.** Admirable. Cf. Virgil, *Æn.* I. 148–154.

479. **Thunderbolts.** Cf. II. 205.

482. **Maiden.** What two senses?

483. Cf. Prol. 40 ff.

484. **Protomartyr.** Who was the Biblical protomartyr?

Die; yet I blame you not so much for fear; 485
Six thousand years of fear have made you that
From which I would redeem you; but for those
That stir this hubbub — you and you — I know
Your faces there in the crowd — to-morrow morn
We hold a great convention; then shall they 490
That love their voices more than duty, learn
With whom they deal, dismissed in shame to live
No wiser than their mothers, household stuff,
Live chattels, mincers of each other's fame,
Full of weak poison, turnspits for the clown, 495
The drunkard's football, laughing-stocks of Time,
Whose brains are in their hands and in their heels,
But fit to flaunt, to dress, to dance, to thrum,
To tramp, to scream, to burnish, and to scour,
For ever slaves at home and fools abroad.' 500

She, ending, waved her hands; thereat the crowd
Muttering, dissolved; then with a smile that looked
A stroke of cruel sunshine on the cliff,
When all the glens are drowned in azure gloom
Of thunder-shower, she floated to us and said: 505

'You have done well, and like a gentleman,
And like a prince; you have our thanks for all;

485. See p. xliv.

486. **Have made you that.** Cf. II. 109 ff., 136–7.

494. **Mincers of each other's fame.** Like Lady Blanche? Cf. II. 78, and note on VI. 321.

497. 'This very vigorous expression is from Longinus, or from the author of the *De Haloneso*, from whom Longinus apparently quotes it: "Unless you carry your brains next to the ground in your heels"' (Collins).

498. **Thrum.** Strum.

499. **Scream.** Cf. V. 422 ff.

502. See p. xliv.

505. **Floated.** Cf. VI. 73.

And you look well too in your woman's dress;
Well have you done, and like a gentleman.
You saved our life; we owe you bitter thanks; 510
Better have died and spilt our bones in the flood —
Then men had said — but now — What hinders me
To take such bloody vengeance on you both? —
Yet since our father — Wasps in our good hive,
You would-be quenchers of the light to be, 515
Barbarians, grosser than your native bears —
O would I had his sceptre for one hour!
You that have dared to break our bound, and gulled
Our servants, wronged and lied and thwarted us —
I wed with thee! *I* bound by precontract 520
Your bride, your bondslave! not tho' all the gold
That veins the world were packed to make your crown,
And every spoken tongue should lord you. Sir,
Your falsehood and yourself are hateful to us;
I trample on your offers and on you; 525
Begone; we will not look upon you more.
Here, push them out at gates.'
In wrath she spake.
Then those eight mighty daughters of the plow
Bent their broad faces toward us, and addressed
Their motion; twice I sought to plead my cause, 530
But on my shoulder hung their heavy hands,
The weight of destiny; so from her face
They pushed us, down the steps, and thro' the court,
And with grim laughter thrust us out at gates.

We crossed the street, and gained a petty mound 535
Beyond it, whence we saw the lights and heard

514. **Hive.** Cf. II. 84.
519. **Servants.** Cf. I. 178 ff.
523. **Lord you.** Call you 'Lord.'
529. **Addressed.** Directed.

The voices murmuring. While I listened, came
On a sudden the weird seizure and the doubt;
I seemed to move among a world of ghosts;
The Princess with her monstrous woman-guard, 540
The jest and earnest working side by side,
The cataract and the tumult and the kings
Were shadows; and the long fantastic night
With all its doings had and had not been,
And all things were and were not.
This went by 545
As strangely as it came, and on my spirits
Settled a gentle cloud of melancholy;
Not long; I shook it off; for spite of doubts
And sudden ghostly shadowings, I was one
To whom the touch of all mischance but came 550
As night to him that sitting on a hill
Sees the midsummer, midnight, Norway sun
Set into sunrise; then we moved away.

537. **Came.** To what artistic end?

538. See p. xliv.

541. The jest is about to end; the earnest to begin. In fact, the comic has fairly shaded into the tragic already.

550 ff. Is this prophetic of the happy result? Is it characteristic of the poet himself?

552. How do you account for the phenomenon of the 'midnight sun'?

INTERLUDE.

THY voice is heard thro' rolling drums,
  That beat to battle where he stands;
Thy face across his fancy comes,
  And gives the battle to his hands;
A moment, while the trumpets blow, 5
  He sees his brood about thy knee;
The next, like fire he meets the foe,
  And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

So Lilia sang; we thought her half-possessed,
She struck such warbling fury thro' the words; 10
And, after, feigning pique at what she called
The raillery, or grotesque, or false sublime—

1. Dawson quotes another version of this song, published separately:

Lady, let the rolling drums
Beat to battle where thy warrior stands;
  Now thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands.

Lady, let the trumpets blow,
Clasp thy little babes about thy knee;
  Now their warrior father meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

Which is the better?

Rolfe says: 'The interlude was added in the 3d ed. There the song begins thus:

When all among the thundering drums
Thy soldier in the battle stands;

and ends with

Strikes him dead for them and thee.
Tara ta tantara.

In the 4th ed. it was changed to its present form.'

10. Cf. IV. 41.

12. **Raillery.** In what passages has this manifested itself?

Like one that wishes at a dance to change
The music — clapped her hands and cried for war,
Or some grand fight to kill and make an end; 15
And he that next inherited the tale
Half turning to the broken statue, said,
'Sir Ralph has got your colors; if I prove
Your knight, and fight your battle, what for me?'
It chanced, her empty glove upon the tomb 20
Lay by her, like a model of her hand.
She took it and she flung it. 'Fight,' she said,
'And make us all we would be, great and good.'
He knightlike in his cap instead of casque,
A cap of Tyrol borrowed from the hall, 25
Arranged the favor, and assumed the Prince.

17. Cf. Prol. 99.

22. **Flung it.** Gloves were usually flung, in chivalrous times, in token of defiance.

23. **Great and good.** Has the Princess shown herself either?

What was gained by inserting this Interlude?

V.

Now, scarce three paces measured from the mound,
We stumbled on a stationary voice,
And 'Stand, who goes?' 'Two from the palace' I.
'The second two; they wait,' he said; 'pass on;
His Highness wakes;' and one that clashed in arms, 5
By glimmering lanes and walls of canvas led,
Threading the soldier-city, till we heard
The drowsy folds of our great ensign shake
From blazoned lions o'er the imperial tent
Whispers of war.
Entering, the sudden light 10
Dazed me half-blind; I stood and seemed to hear,
As in a poplar grove when a light wind wakes
A lisping of the innumerous leaf and dies,
Each hissing in his neighbor's ear; and then
A strangled titter, out of which there brake 15
On all sides, clamoring etiquette to death,
Unmeasured mirth; while now the two old kings
Began to wag their baldness up and down,
The fresh young captains flashed their glittering teeth,
The huge bush-bearded Barons heaved and blew, 20
And slain with laughter rolled the gilded Squire.

At length my Sire, his rough cheek wet with tears,
Panted from weary sides 'King, you are free!
We did but keep you surety for our son,

2. **Stationary voice.** The voice of a *stationary* (Lat. *stationarius*), or sentinel.
4. **The second two.** Who? Cf. IV. 222.
7. **Threading.** Cf. IV. 242.
21. **Gilded Squire.** Gorgeously dressed youth, not yet a knight.

If this be he, — or a draggled mawkin, thou, 25
That tends her bristled grunters in the sludge: '
For I was drenched with ooze, and torn with briers,
More crumpled than a poppy from the sheath,
And all one rag; disprinced from head to heel.
Then some one sent beneath his vaulted palm 30
A whispered jest to some one near him, 'Look,
He has been among his shadows.' 'Satan take
The old women and their shadows! (thus the King
Roared) make yourself a man to fight with men.
Go; Cyril told us all.'
As boys that slink 35
From ferule and the trespass-chiding eye,
Away we stole, and transient in a trice
From what was left of faded woman-slough
To sheathing splendors and the golden scale
Of harness, issued in the sun, that now 40
Leapt from the dewy shoulders of the Earth,
And hit the Northern hills. Here Cyril met us,
A little shy at first, but by and by
We twain, with mutual pardon asked and given
For stroke and song, resoldered peace, whereon 45
Followed his tale. Amazed he fled away
Thro' the dark land, and later in the night
Had come on Psyche weeping: 'Then we fell
Into your father's hand, and there she lies,
But will not speak, nor stir.'
He showed a tent 50
A stone-shot off; we entered in, and there

25. **Mawkin.** Menial servant. In *The Last Tournament* Tennyson speaks of the 'swineherd's malkin,' *malkin* being the same word.

26. **Sludge.** Mire.

28. **From the sheath.** When it has just blossomed.

37. **Transient.** Making a change.

Among piled arms and rough accoutrements,
Pitiful sight, wrapped in a soldier's cloak,
Like some sweet sculpture draped from head to foot,
And pushed by rude hands from its pedestal, 55
All her fair length upon the ground she lay;
And at her head a follower of the camp,
A charred and wrinkled piece of womanhood,
Sat watching like a watcher by the dead.

Then Florian knelt, and 'Come,' he whispered to her, 60
'Lift up your head, sweet sister; lie not thus.
What have you done but right? you could not slay
Me, nor your prince; look up; be comforted;
Sweet is it to have done the thing one ought,
When fallen in darker ways.' And likewise I: 65
'Be comforted; have I not lost her too,
In whose least act abides the nameless charm
That none has else for me?' She heard, she moved,
She moaned, a folded voice; and up she sat,
And raised the cloak from brows as pale and smooth 70
As those that mourn half-shrouded over death
In deathless marble. 'Her,' she said, 'my friend—
Parted from her—betrayed her cause and mine—
Where shall I breathe? Why kept ye not your faith?
O base and bad! What comfort? none for me!' 75
To whom remorseful Cyril, 'Yet I pray

54. Tennyson has abundance of statues and sculpture in this poem.

60–65. Luce (p. 54) cites this passage, and also 78–102, as examples of weakness in Tennyson. He says: 'Even in his charm we often find a softness which sometimes suggests want of strength, and is akin to effeminacy. . . . As to the source of much of this weakness in Tennyson, . . . we may find it in the earlier work of Keats.'

69. Folded voice. Is not this an affected expression?

74. Why kept ye not your faith? Cf. II. 275–280.

Take comfort; live, dear lady, for your child!'
At which she lifted up her voice and cried:

'Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah, my child,
My one sweet child, whom I shall see no more! 80
For now will cruel Ida keep her back;
And either she will die from want of care,
Or sicken with ill-usage, when they say
"The child is hers"—for every little fault,
"The child is hers;" and they will beat my girl 85
Remembering her mother; O my flower!
Or they will take her, they will make her hard,
And she will pass me by in after-life
With some cold reverence worse than were she dead.
Ill mother that I was to leave her there, 90
To lag behind, scared by the cry they made,
The horror of the shame among them all;
But I will go and sit beside the doors,
And make a wild petition night and day,
Until they hate to hear me like a wind 95
Wailing for ever, till they open to me,
And lay my little blossom at my feet,
My babe, my sweet Aglaïa, my one child;
And I will take her up and go my way,

77. **Live . . . for your child.** Cf. the last line of the next song.

79 ff. Luce says (p. 364): 'Nothing, perhaps, could be weaker than Lady Psyche's lamentation.' On the other hand, Woodberry remarks: 'This highly wrought speech, in the manner of Tennyson's shorter idyls, stands out in poetic relief as the songs and idyl in VII.' Stopford Brooke (*Tennyson*, p. 98) agrees with Luce: 'Compare the passion of motherhood as expressed in this magnificent poem [Wordsworth's *Affliction of Margaret*] with that of Psyche. . . . There is no comparison. Indeed, the motherhood in Wordsworth's *The Complaint* and *Her eyes are wild* is closer, more intimate to the primal passion, than anything in Tennyson, save always the intense penetration of *Rizpah*.'

And satisfy my soul with kissing her; 100
Ah! what might that man not deserve of me
Who gave me back my child?' 'Be comforted,'
Said Cyril, 'you shall have it;' but again
She veiled her brows, and prone she sank, and so,
Like tender things that being caught feign death, 105
Spoke not, nor stirred.
By this a murmur ran
Thro' all the camp, and inward raced the scouts
With rumor of Prince Arac hard at hand.
We left her by the woman, and without
Found the gray kings at parle; and 'Look you' cried 110
My father 'that our compact be fulfilled;
You have spoilt this child; she laughs at you and man;
She wrongs herself, her sex, and me, and him;
But red-faced war has rods of steel and fire;
She yields, or war.'
Then Gama turned to me: 115
'We fear, indeed, you spent a stormy time
With our strange girl; and yet they say that still
You love her. Give us, then, your mind at large;
How say you, war or not?'
'Not war, if possible,
O king,' I said, 'lest from the abuse of war, 120
The desecrated shrine, the trampled year,
The smoldering homestead, and the household flower
Torn from the lintel — all the common wrong —
A smoke go up thro' which I loom to her

110. **Parle.** Parley, conference.

121. **Year.** Harvest.

124–5. **A smoke . . . monster.** 'Notice how in this expression the actual smoke ascending from the burning houses and granaries suggests, and is almost identified with, the moral distorting medium through which he fears the Princess will thenceforth regard him' (Wallace).

Three times a monster; now she lightens scorn 125
At him that mars her plan, but then would hate
(And every voice she talked with ratify it,
And every face she looked on justify it)
The general foe. More soluble is this knot
By gentleness than war. I want her love. 130
What were I nigher this altho' we dashed
Your cities into shards with catapults?
She would not love; — or brought her chained, a slave,
The lifting of whose eyelash is my lord?
Not ever would she love; but brooding turn 135
The book of scorn, till all my flitting chance
Were caught within the record of her wrongs,
And crushed to death; and rather, Sire, than this
I would the old God of war himself were dead,
Forgotten, rusting on his iron hills, 140
Rotting on some wild shore with ribs of wreck,
Or like an old-world mammoth bulked in ice,
Not to be molten out.'
And roughly spake
My father, 'Tut, you know them not, the girls.
Boy, when I hear you prate I almost think 145
That idiot legend credible. Look you, Sir!
Man is the hunter; woman is his game;
The sleek and shining creatures of the chase,
We hunt them for the beauty of their skins;

125. **Lightens.** Flashes. Cf. II. 117.
132. **Shards.** Cf. our word *potsherd.*
134. An affected phrase?
142. **Mammoth.** Explain.
143. **Spake.** Brooke says (p. 158): 'Through the piece almost every phase of opinion on the matter is delivered by both men and women.'
146. **Idiot legend.** Cf. I. 5.
148. What species of animal does this suggest?

They love us for it, and we ride them down. 150
Wheedling and siding with them! Out! for shame!
Boy, there 's no rose that 's half so dear to them
As he that does the thing they dare not do,
Breathing and sounding beauteous battle, comes
With the air of the trumpet round him, and leaps in 155
Among the women, snares them by the score
Flattered and flustered, wins, tho' dashed with death
He reddens what he kisses; thus I won
Your mother, a good mother, a good wife,
Worth winning; but this firebrand — gentleness 160
To such as her! If Cyril spake her true,
To catch a dragon in a cherry net,
To trip a tigress with a gossamer,
Were wisdom to it.'

'Yea but Sire,' I cried,
'Wild natures need wise curbs. The soldier? No: 165
What dares not Ida do that she should prize
The soldier? I beheld her, when she rose
The yesternight, and storming in extremes,
Stood for her cause, and flung defiance down
Gagelike to man, and had not shunned the death, 170
No, not the soldier's; yet I hold her, king,
True woman; but you clash them all in one,
That have as many differences as we.
The violet varies from the lily as far
As oak from elm; one loves the soldier, one 175
The silken priest of peace, one this, one that,

154–7. See p. xliv.

157. **Dashed with death.** Bespattered with blood. Cf. *Jul. Cæs.* III. i. 206.

162. **A cherry net.** 'Fruit trees in England are commonly protected by light nets against the depredations of birds' (Wallace).

172. **True woman.** Why did he hold her so? What proof had she given?

And some unworthily; their sinless faith
A maiden moon that sparkles on a sty,
Glorifying clown and satyr; whence they need
More breadth of culture; is not Ida right? 180
They worth it? truer to the law within?
Severer in the logic of a life?
Twice as magnetic to sweet influences
Of earth and heaven? And she of whom you speak,
My mother, looks as whole as some serene 185
Creation minted in the golden moods
Of sovereign artists; not a thought, a touch,
But pure as lines of green that streak the white
Of the first snowdrop's inner leaves; I say,
Not like the piebald miscellany, man, 190
Bursts of great heart and slips in sensual mire,
But whole and one; and take them all-in-all,
Were we ourselves but half as good, as kind,
As truthful, much that Ida claims as right
Had ne'er been mooted, but as frankly theirs 195
As dues of Nature. To our point: not war;
Lest I lose all.'

'Nay, nay, you spake but sense'

178. Cf. Guido Guinicelli, *Of the Gentle Heart* (in Rossetti's *Dante and his Circle*, p. 292):

> The sun strikes full upon the mud all day;
> It remains vile, nor the sun's worth is less.
> 'By race I am gentle,' the proud man doth say;
> He is the mud, the sun is gentleness.

185. Cf. VII. 298 ff.

188–9. Luce (p. 227) compares *Coriolanus* V. iii. 65–67, and adds: 'Pure as a fine line; a line of green; penciled on white, the white of a snowdrop, of the "first snowdrop of the year"; and on the snowdrop's inmost leaves.'

190. **Piebald.** Explain.

192. **Whole.** Complete, entire. Cf. 185.

Said Gama. 'We remember love ourself
In our sweet youth; we did not rate him then
This red-hot iron to be shaped with blows. 200
You talk almost like Ida; *she* can talk;
And there is something in it, as you say;
But you talk kindlier; we esteem you for it. —
He seems a gracious and a gallant Prince,
I would he had our daughter; for the rest, 205
Our own detention, why, the causes weighed,
Fatherly fears — you used us courteously —
We would do much to gratify your Prince —
We pardon it; and for your ingress here
Upon the skirt and fringe of our fair land, 210
You did but come as goblins in the night,
Nor in the furrow broke the plowman's head,
Nor burnt the grange, nor bussed the milking-maid,
Nor robbed the farmer of his bowl of cream;
But let your Prince (our royal word upon it, 215
He comes back safe) ride with us to our lines,
And speak with Arac; Arac's word is thrice
As ours with Ida; something may be done —
I know not what — and ours shall see us friends.
You likewise, our late guests, if so you will, 220
Follow us; who knows? we four may build some plan
Foursquare to opposition.'
Here he reached

222. **Foursquare.** Wallace comments: 'This expression, denoting the best conformation for sturdy resistance, is used again in the *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* 39, where the "last great Englishman" is spoken of as

that tower of strength
Which stood foursquare to all the winds that blew.'

The expression is Greek, τετράγωνος, and is used by Aristotle.

White hands of farewell to my sire, who growled
An answer which, half-muffled in his beard,
Let so much out as gave us leave to go. 225

Then rode we with the old king across the lawns
Beneath huge trees, a thousand rings of Spring
In every bole, a song on every spray
Of birds that piped their Valentines, and woke
Desire in me to infuse my tale of love 230
In the old king's ears, who promised help, and oozed
All o'er with honeyed answer as we rode;
And blossom-fragrant slipped the heavy dews
Gathered by night and peace, with each light air
On our mailed heads; but other thoughts than peace 235
Burnt in us when we saw the embattled squares
And squadrons of the Prince, trampling the flowers
With clamor; for among them rose a cry
As if to greet the king; they made a halt;
The horses yelled; they clashed their arms; the drum 240
Beat; merrily-blowing shrilled the martial fife;
And in the blast and bray of the long horn
And serpent-throated bugle, undulated
The banner. Anon to meet us lightly pranced
Three captains out; nor ever had I seen 245
Such thews of men; the midmost and the highest
Was Arac; all about his motion clung
The shadow of his sister, as the beam
Of the East, that played upon them, made them glance
Like those three stars of the airy Giant's zone, 250

227. Rings. Cf. *The Talking Oak* 84, 173.

237 ff. See p. xliv.

239–245. Hadley calls this a 'fine exhibition of "the pomp and circumstance of glorious war."'

250. Airy Giant's zone. The belt of the constellation Orion.

That glitter burnished by the frosty dark;
And as the fiery Sirius alters hue,
And bickers into red and emerald, shone
Their morions, washed with morning, as they came.

252-3. Dawson says: 'When highest in the heavens it unquestionably appears white, but its altitude is never very great, and when low down on the horizon sailors notice the change of color referred to by the poet, and ascribe it correctly to atmospheric influences. Sirius has always been remarkable for scintillation, due probably to its great brightness. Sailors in ancient times observed all such things very closely, and Tennyson is following Homer, as will appear by some remarks on this passage in Proctor's *Myths and Morals of Astronomy*, p. 166:

'"Every bright star when close to the horizon shows these colors, and so much the more distinctly as the star is the brighter. Sirius, which surpasses the brightest stars of the northern hemisphere full four times in lustre, shows these changes of color so conspicuously that they were regarded as specially characteristic of this star, insomuch that Homer speaks of Sirius (not by name, but as the 'Star of Autumn') shining most beautifully 'when laved of ocean's wave,' — that is, when close to the horizon."'

Dawson adds: 'The expression "laved of ocean's wave" explains the "washed with morning" of our poet. The glitter of the early morning sun on the bright helmets of the brothers and the glance of light upon their armor as they rode, are vividly realized in this beautiful simile.'

The Homeric passage referred to is *Iliad* V. 4-6: 'She kindled flame unwearied from his helmet and shield, like to the star of summer that above all others glittereth bright after he hath bathed in the ocean stream.'

Collins says: 'A beautiful expression, in which Tennyson had been anticipated by Browning, who describes Florence as:

Washed by the morning water-gold.

(*Old Pictures in Florence.*)'

Memorize 252-4.

253. Bickers. Flickers, glances unsteadily back and forth. A most expressive word. Cf. *Geraint and Enid:*

Turning round she saw
Dust, and the points of lances *bicker* in it.

And I that prated peace, when first I heard 255
War-music, felt the blind wild-beast of force,
Whose home is in the sinews of a man,
Stir in me as to strike; then took the king
His three broad sons; with now a wandering hand
And now a pointed finger, told them all; 260
A common light of smiles at our disguise
Broke from their lips, and ere the windy jest
Had labored down within his ample lungs,
The genial giant, Arac, rolled himself
Thrice in the saddle, then burst out in words. 265

'Our land invaded, 'sdeath! and he himself
Your captive, yet my father wills not war;
And, 'sdeath! myself, what care I, war or no?
But then this question of your troth remains;
And there 's a downright honest meaning in her; 270
She flies too high, she flies too high! and yet
She asked but space and fair-play for her scheme;
She pressed and pressed it on me — I myself,
What know I of these things? but, life and soul!
I thought her half-right talking of her wrongs; 275
I say she flies too high; 'sdeath! what of that?
I take her for the flower of womankind,
And so I often told her, right or wrong,
And, Prince, she can be sweet to those she loves,
And, right or wrong, I care not; this is all, 280
I stand upon her side; she made me swear it —
'Sdeath — and with solemn rites by candle-light —

268. 'Sdeath. An abbreviation of *God's death;* an old expletive, originally an oath.

270. This is good testimony; Arac ought to have known her. Cf. 275, 277. Comparing Arac and Ida, not to speak of the other two brothers, with Gama, what sort of mother must they have had?

Swear by St. something — I forget her name —
Her that talked down the fifty wisest men;
She was a princess too; and so I swore. 285
Come, this is all; she will not; waive your claim;
If not, the foughten field — what else? — at once
Decides it, 'sdeath! against my father's will.'

I lagged in answer, loth to render up
My precontract, and loth by brainless war 290
To cleave the rift of difference deeper yet;
Till one of those two brothers, half aside
And fingering at the hair about his lip,
To prick us on to combat 'Like to like!
The woman's garment hid the woman's heart.' 295
A taunt that clenched his purpose like a blow!
For fiery-short was Cyril's counter-scoff,
And sharp I answered, touched upon the point

283–5. St. something . . . princess too. 'The reference is to St. Catharine of Alexandria, an almost, if not wholly, mythical personage, round whose name has grown up a vast amount of legendary lore. She is said to have lived about the beginning of the fourth century, and to have been the daughter of Costus, the half-brother of Constantine, by Sabinella, Queen of Egypt, whom she succeeded on the throne of that country. This story is of course entirely without historical warrant. She was remarkable for her learning and culture, which have won for her the title of the Patron Saint of Philosophy, and especially of ladies of high birth who pursue this study. According to the commonly received legend, the Emperor Maxentius (or, as some say, Maximin) sent the fifty wisest men of his court to convert her from Christianity, but she confuted them all with their own weapons of scholarly rhetoric, and won them over to her faith' (Wallace).

Why not *she*, instead of **her**?

287. Foughten. The old form of the past participle. Cf. *Henry IV.* IV. vi. 16, and *The Coming of Arthur* 134–5.

296. Brainless. Can you think of a truer characterization of war?

Where idle boys are cowards to their shame,
'Decide it here: why not? we are three to three.' 300

Then spake the third 'But three to three? no more?
No more, and in our noble sister's cause?
More, more, for honor; every captain waits
Hungry for honor, angry for his king.
More, more, some fifty on a side, that each 305
May breathe himself, and quick! by overthrow
Of these or those, the question settled die.'
'Yea,' answered I, 'for this wild wreath of air,
This flake of rainbow flying on the highest
Foam of men's deeds — this honor, if ye will. 310
It needs must be for honor if at all;
Since, what decision? if we fail, we fail,
And if we win, we fail; she would not keep
Her compact.' ''Sdeath! but we will send to her,'
Said Arac, 'worthy reasons why she should 315
Bide by this issue; let our missive thro',
And you shall have her answer by the word.'

'Boys!' shrieked the old king, but vainlier than a hen
To her false daughters in the pool; for none
Regarded; neither seemed there more to say; 320
Back rode we to my father's camp, and found
He thrice had sent a herald to the gates,
To learn if Ida yet would cede our claim,

299. Explain.
305. **Fifty.** Cf. Chaucer, *Knight's Tale.*
308. Cf. VII. 198.
316. **Missive.** Either 'letter,' or 'messenger,' it is not easy to decide which.
318. Cf. note on 433.
319. **False daughters.** Ducklings.

Or by denial flush her babbling wells
With her own people's life; three times he went; 325
The first he blew and blew, but none appeared;
He battered at the doors; none came; the next,
An awful voice within had warned him thence;
The third, and those eight daughters of the plow
Came sallying thro' the gates, and caught his hair, 330
And so belabored him on rib and cheek
They made him wild; not less one glance he caught
Thro' open doors of Ida stationed there
Unshaken, clinging to her purpose, firm
Tho' compassed by two armies and the noise 335
Of arms; and standing like a stately pine
Set in a cataract on an island-crag,
When storm is on the heights, and right and left,
Sucked from the dark heart of the long hills, roll

324. Cf. I. 214–5.

336. **Stately pine.** Collins says: 'The fine simile in which Ida's unshaken firmness is compared to a pine vexed and tried by storm was evidently suggested by the simile in which Virgil compares Æneas under similar circumstances to an oak.' The Virgilian passage is IV. 441 ff. (not II. 441 ff., as Collins has it): 'Even as when Alpine blasts strive one against another to tear up an oak vigorous in its ancient strength, blowing upon it, now from this point, now from that, a creaking is heard, and, as the trunk is shaken, the foliage deeply strews the ground; the tree itself clings to the crag, and as far as it lifts its top to the air of heaven, so far does it extend its root to hell. Just so the hero is beaten upon by incessant entreaties from every point, and feels the pain keenly in his mighty heart; his resolve remains unshaken; the tears that fall are vain.'

On the other hand, compare the passage quoted by Rolfe from the *Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough*, dated in the Valley of Cauterets, Sept. 7, 1861: 'I have been out for a walk with A. T. to a sort of island between two waterfalls, with pines on it, of which he retained a recollection from his visit of thirty-one years ago, and which, moreover, furnished a simile to *The Princess*. He is very fond of this place, evidently.' Cf. IV. 472 ff.

339–340. See p. xliv.

The torrents, dashed to the vale; and yet her will 340
Bred will in me to overcome it or fall.

But when I told the king that I was pledged
To fight in tourney for my bride, he clashed
His iron palms together with a cry;
Himself would tilt it out among the lads; 345
But overborne by all his bearded lords
With reasons drawn from age and state, perforce
He yielded, wroth and red, with fierce demur;
And many a bold knight started up in heat,
And sware to combat for my claim till death. 350

All on this side the palace ran the field
Flat to the garden-wall; and likewise here,
Above the garden's glowing blossom-belts,
A columned entry shone, and marble stairs,
And great bronze valves embossed with Tomyris 355
And what she did to Cyrus after fight,
But now fast barred; so here upon the flat
All that long morn the lists were hammered up,
And all that morn the heralds to and fro,
With message and defiance, went and came; 360
Last, Ida's answer, in a royal hand,
But shaken here and there, and rolling words
Oration-like. I kissed it, and I read.

340. **Her will.** Cf. I. 47.

346 **Bearded lords.** Cf. 20.

355. **Valves** Cf. IV. 184 —**Tomyris.** She was queen of the Massagetæ In a battle with Cyrus the Great (B.C. 529), who had invaded her territory, the latter was slain. Tomyris had threatened him with his fill of blood, in consequence of his refusal to release her son, whom he had captured. Accordingly she now made a search for the body of Cyrus, and, finding it, suspended his head in a leather bag full of blood.

358. **Lists.** Cf. *Ivanhoe*, Chap. VIII.

361. **Royal hand.** Explain.

'O brother, you have known the pangs we felt,
What heats of indignation, when we heard 365
Of those that iron-cramped their women's feet;
Of lands in which at the altar the poor bride
Gives her harsh groom for bridal-gift a scourge;
Of living hearts that crack within the fire
Where smolder their dead despots; and of those, — 370
Mothers, — that, all prophetic pity, fling
Their pretty maids in the running flood, and swoops
The vulture, beak and talon, at the heart
Made for all noble motion; and I saw
That equal baseness lived in sleeker times 375
With smoother men; the old leaven leavened all;
Millions of throats would bawl for civil rights,
No woman named; therefore I set my face
Against all men, and lived but for mine own.
Far off from men I built a fold for them; 380
I stored it full of rich memorial;
I fenced it round with gallant institutes,
And biting laws to scare the beasts of prey,
And prospered; till a rout of saucy boys
Brake on us at our books, and marred our peace, 385

367–370. **Of lands,** etc. 'Allusion is made in the first two lines to Russian customs in the seventeenth century. One was that the bride, on her wedding day, should present her husband, in token of submission, with a whip made by her own hands. . . . The last two lines refer to the Hindoo *Suttee*, now abolished, in conformity with which widows were burned upon the funeral pyres of their husbands' (Dawson).

370. **Those.** Hindoo mothers are meant.

371. **All prophetic pity.** 'A curious expression, denoting their compassion for the hard fate awaiting their daughters in the future if they should have the misfortune to remain unmarried beyond the recognized period' (Wallace).

372. **Flood.** The Ganges.

382. **Institutes.** Statutes, ordinances.

385–6. See p. xliv.

Masked like our maids, blustering I know not what
Of insolence and love, some pretext held
Of baby troth, invalid, since my will
Sealed not the bond — the striplings! — for their sport! —
I tamed my leopards; shall I not tame these? 390
Or you or I? for since you think me touched
In honor — what, I would not aught of false —
Is not our cause pure? and whereas I know
Your prowess, Arac, and what mother's blood
You draw from, fight; you failing, I abide 395
What end soever; fail you will not. Still,
Take not his life; he risked it for my own;
His mother lives; yet whatsoe'er you do,
Fight and fight well; strike and strike home. O dear
Brothers, the woman's Angel guards you, you 400
The sole men to be mingled with our cause,
The sole men we shall prize in the aftertime,
Your very armor hallowed, and your statues
Reared, sung to, when, this gad-fly brushed aside,
We plant a solid foot into the Time, 405
And mold a generation strong to move
With claim on claim from right to right, till she
Whose name is yoked with children's, know herself;
And Knowledge in our own land make her free,
And, ever following those two crowned twins, 410
Commerce and conquest, shower the fiery grain

388. Cf. I. 33.
390. **Leopards.** Cf. II. 19.
391. **Or you or I?** One of us two shall tame them.
394. **Mother's.** Not 'father's,' observe. Cf. 496.
399. See p. xliv.
404. **Gad-fly.** Momentary annoyance.
409. We are told 'The truth shall make you free' (John 8. 32). Is truth identical with knowledge?

Of freedom broadcast over all that orbs
Between the Northern and the Southern morn.'

Then came a postscript dashed across the rest:
'See that there be no traitors in your camp; 415
We seem a nest of traitors — none to trust
Since our arms failed — this Egypt-plague of men!
Almost our maids were better at their homes,
Than thus man-girdled here; indeed, I think
Our chiefest comfort is the little child 420

411. **Commerce and conquest.** Is the poet thinking of England? — **Fiery grain.** Why **fiery?**

412. **Orbs.** Forms itself into an orb. Cf. the similar use of *sphere* in *In Memoriam* IX. 13:

Sphere all your lights around, above.

413. What does **morn** connote?

414. **Postscript.** Is this a humorous touch?

417. **Egypt-plague.** Cf. Exodus, Chaps. VIII and X.

418. Anticipatory of VI. 317, 358 ff.

420 ff. Cf. Tennyson's comment on p. 36. Dawson says (pp. 35–37): 'The poem is a medley in this respect, for the leading characters are all vanquished, all save one — Psyche's baby — she is the conquering heroine of the epic. Ridiculous in the lecture-room, the babe, in the poem, as in the songs, is made the central point upon which the plot turns; for the unconscious child is the concrete embodiment of Nature herself, clearing away all merely intellectual theories by her silent influence. Ida feels the power of the child. The postscript of the dispatch sent to her brother in the height of her indignation, contains, as is fitting, the kernel of the matter. She says:

I took it for an hour in mine own bed
This morning; there the tender orphan hands
Felt at my heart, and seemed to charm from thence
The wrath I nursed against the world.

Rash Princess! that fatal hour dashed

the hopes of half the world.

Of one unworthy mother; which she left;
She shall not have it back; the child shall grow
To prize the authentic mother of her mind.
I took it for an hour in mine own bed
This morning; there the tender orphan hands 425
Felt at my heart, and seemed to charm from thence
The wrath I nursed against the world; farewell.'

I ceased; he said, 'Stubborn, but she may sit
Upon a king's right hand in thunderstorms,
And breed up warriors! See now — tho' yourself 430
Be dazzled by the wildfire Love to sloughs
That swallow common sense — the spindling king,
This Gama, swamped in lazy tolerance.

Alas for these hopes! The cause, the great cause, totters to the fall when the Head confesses:

I felt
Thy helpless warmth about my barren breast
In the dead prime.

Whenever the plot thickens the babe appears. It is with Ida on her judgment-seat. In the topmost height of the storm the wail of the "lost lamb at her feet" reduces her eloquent anger into incoherence. She carries it when she sings her song of triumph. When she goes to tend her wounded brothers on the battle-field she carries it. Through it, and for it, Cyril pleads his successful suit, and wins it for the mother. For its sake the mother is pardoned. O fatal babe! more fatal to the hopes of woman than the doomful horse to the proud towers of Ilion — for through thee the walls of pride are breached, and all the conquering affections flock in.'

424. Cf. III. 228–9.

431. Cf. IV. 338–9.

433. Lazy tolerance. 'He was as helpless against the two widows who stuffed his daughter's head with theories, as he doubtless was before Ida's mother in her lifetime. His absolute powerlessness over his children, not only over Ida, but over Arac and his brothers, is manifest when the tournament is arrayed in his presence in spite of his timidity' (Dawson, p. 40).

When the man wants weight, the woman takes it up,
And topples down the scales; but this is fixed 435
As are the roots of earth and base of all:
Man for the field and woman for the hearth;
Man for the sword and for the needle she;
Man with the head and woman with the heart;
Man to command and woman to obey; 440
All else confusion. Look you! the gray mare
Is ill to live with, when her whinny shrills
From tile to scullery, and her small goodman
Shrinks in his arm-chair, while the fires of hell
Mix with his hearth; but you — she's yet a colt — 445
Take, break her; strongly groomed and straitly curbed,
She might not rank with those detestable
That let the bantling scald at home, and brawl

434–5. Dawson quotes Dr. Antoinette Brown Blackwell's *The Sexes throughout Nature:* 'Whenever brilliantly colored male birds have acquired something of maternal habits, tastes, and impulses, conversely the females seem always to have acquired some counterbalancing weight of male characters. They are large in relative size, are brilliantly colored, are active and quarrelsome, or are a little of all these together. The large majority of birds illustrate this law.'

He goes on to say: 'Decidedly an unpleasant prospect this, seeing that in a ballroom the fact is evident that already the male portion of our species have lost the gay attire they used to wear in former centuries.'

440. Cf. Gen. 3. 16: 'Thy desire shall be to the husband, and he shall rule over thee'; Eph. 5. 12: 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.' Also Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida* I. iii. 85–124.

441. **Gray mare.** Referring to the proverb found as early as Heywood (*ca.* 1565): 'The gray mare is the better horse.'

443. **Tile.** Roof. — **Scullery.** Usually in basement (in England). — **Goodman.** Husband; a Shakespearian word, used as a term of familiarity, with a slight shade of contempt.

447. **Detestable.** Adjective used as noun.

448. **Bantling.** Used in the same vein as **goodman, 443.**

Their rights or wrongs like potherbs in the street.
They say she's comely; there's the fairer chance; 450
I like her none the less for rating at her!
Besides, the woman wed is not as we,
But suffers change of frame. A lusty brace
Of twins may weed her of her folly. Boy,
The bearing and the training of a child 455
Is woman's wisdom.'
Thus the hard old king.
I took my leave, for it was nearly noon;
I pored upon her letter which I held,
And on the little clause 'Take not his life;'
I mused on that wild morning in the woods, 460
And on the 'Follow, follow, thou shalt win;'
I thought on all the wrathful king had said,
And how the strange betrothment was to end;
Then I remembered that burnt sorcerer's curse
That one should fight with shadows and should fall, 465
And like a flash the weird affection came:
King, camp and college turned to hollow shows;
I seemed to move in old memorial tilts,
And doing battle with forgotten ghosts,
To dream myself the shadow of a dream; 470

453. Suffers change of frame. A physiological fact.

456. How nearly does this view (428–456) agree with Tennyson's own? Cf. *In Memoriam* XL. st. 4:

> Her office there to rear, to teach,
> Becoming, as is meet and fit,
> A link among the days, to knit
> The generations each to each.

459. Cf. 397.

460–1. Cf. I. 89–99.

464. Cf. I. 5–10.

467. Hollow shows. Cf. III. 169.

469. Forgotten ghosts. Cf. I. 17; IV. 539.

470. Cf. Prol. 222; I. 18; III. 172.

And ere I woke it was the point of noon;
The lists were ready. Empanoplied and plumed
We entered in, and waited, fifty there
Opposed to fifty, till the trumpet blared
At the barrier like a wild horn in a land 475
Of echoes, and a moment, and once more
The trumpet, and again; at which the storm
Of galloping hoofs bare on the ridge of spears
And riders front to front, until they closed
In conflict, with the crash of shivering points, 480
And thunder. Yet it seemed a dream I dreamed
Of fighting. On his haunches rose the steed,
And into fiery splinters leapt the lance,
And out of stricken helmets sprang the fire.
Part sat like rocks; part reeled, but kept their seats; 485
Part rolled on the earth, and rose again, and drew;
Part stumbled, mixed with floundering horses. Down
From those two bulks at Arac's side, and down
From Arac's arm as from a giant's flail,
The large blows rained, as here and everywhere 490
He rode the mellay, lord of the ringing lists,
And all the plain,—brand, mace, and shaft, and shield—

472. **Lists.** Cf. 358.

473. **Fifty.** Cf. Chaucer, *Knight's Tale.* Which is better, the tournament scene there or here?

474 **ff.** 'From here to the end of the canto we have one of the most rapid and vehement pieces of description in the language' (Wallace).

Is **blared** better than 'blew'?

475. Cf. the song on p. 85.

478. See p. xlv.

491–3. See p. xlv.

491. **Mellay.** General, confused conflict; from the French *mêlée.* Cedric was displeased with the use of the latter word (*Ivanhoe,* Chap. VIII.).

492. **Brand, mace, and shaft.** Define these nouns.

Shocked, like an iron-clanging anvil banged
With hammers; till I thought, 'Can this be he
From Gama's dwarfish loins? if this be so, 495
The mother makes us most' — and in my dream
I glanced aside, and saw the palace-front
Alive with fluttering scarfs and ladies' eyes,
And highest, among the statues, statue-like,
Between a cymbaled Miriam and a Jael, 500
With Psyche's babe, was Ida watching us,
A single band of gold about her hair,
Like a Saint's glory up in heaven; but she
No saint — inexorable — no tenderness —
Too hard, too cruel: yet she sees me fight, 505
Yea, let her see me fall! With that I drave
Among the thickest and bore down a Prince,
And Cyril one. Yea, let me make my dream
All that I would. But that large-molded man,
His visage all agrin as at a wake, 510
Made at me thro' the press, and, staggering back
With stroke on stroke the horse and horseman, came

493. Collins (p. 22) praises the onomatopœic effect. Cf. I. 213.

499 ff. Study the art here. Why are the statues mentioned? Why the particular two of line 500? Why 'with Psyche's babe' — why not as well alone, or with some one else? Why 'a single band of gold', and not the 'jewel' of IV. 254? Why 'up in heaven'? What were Ida's feelings at this moment — can you judge from 397?

500. Cf. Exod. 15. 20, 21; Judges 4. 17–22.

505. **Sees.** Why the change to the present?

509 ff. Hadley, commenting upon this passage, to 519, says: 'The overwhelming onset of Prince Arac is described in verses not unfit for the exploits of divine Achilles.'

510. **Agrin.** Rolfe compares Charlotte Brontë, *Shirley:* 'His hard features were revealed all *agrin* and ashine with glee.'

Cf. 264.

As comes a pillar of electric cloud,
Flaying the roofs and sucking up the drains,
And shadowing down the champaign till it strikes 515
On a wood, and takes, and breaks, and cracks, and splits,
And twists the grain with such a roar that Earth
Reels, and the herdsmen cry; for everything
Gave way before him; only Florian, he
That loved me closer than his own right eye, 520
Thrust in between; but Arac rode him down;
And Cyril seeing it, pushed against the Prince,
With Psyche's color round his helmet; tough,
Strong, supple, sinew-corded, apt at arms;
But tougher, heavier, stronger, he that smote 525
And threw him; last I spurred; I felt my veins
Stretch with fierce heat; a moment hand to hand,
And sword to sword, and horse to horse we hung,
Till I struck out and shouted; the blade glanced,
I did but shear a feather, and dream and truth 530
Flowed from me; darkness closed me; and I fell.

513 **ff.** Collins says: 'With this graphic description of the progress of a thunderbolt compare Lucan's equally graphic description of the same thing, *Pharsalia* I. 152–8.' The **pillar** is a cyclone or tornado.

514 **ff.** See p. xlv.

520. **Eye.** *Oculus*, and its diminutive, *ocellus*, were used as terms of endearment in Latin; so ὄμμα and ὀφθαλμός in Greek.

523. Cf. Interlude 18 ff.

524. **Sinew-corded.** Explain.

531. Why did he fall? Was it the deepening of his trance, or was he wounded? Perhaps the sequel will show.

Home they brought her warrior dead;
  She nor swooned, nor uttered cry;
All her maidens, watching, said,
  'She must weep or she will die.'

Then they praised him, soft and low,
  Called him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe;
  Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
  Lightly to the warrior stepped,
Took the face-cloth from the face;
  Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
  Set his child upon her knee;
Like summer tempest came her tears —
  'Sweet my child, I live for thee.'

Dawson notes that this 'is probably a later version or adaptation of a song first published in a volume of selections issued in 1865, and not found in most of the editions of Tennyson's collected works:

Home they brought him slain with spears,
  They brought him home at even-fall;
All alone she sits and hears
  Echoes in his empty hall,
                Sounding on the morrow.

The sun peeped in from open field,
  The boy began to leap and prance,
  Rode upon his father's lance,
Beat upon his father's shield,
                'Oh hush, my joy, my sorrow!'

He compares a passage in Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, Canto I; and 'a correspondent,' quoted in a footnote to *Tennysoniana*, 2d ed., p. 105, calls the song 'a translation from the Anglo-Saxon fragment Gudrun, which may be found in Conybeare's *Anglo-Saxon Poetry*.' Unfortunately, there never is, and probably never was, such an Anglo-Saxon fragment. What is meant is the old Norse *Tale of Gudrun* (*Guðrunarkviða*), which may be found, with a noble translation, in Vigfusson and Powell's *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, Vol. I. The resemblance is not close, however. In the Norse poem the uncovering of the warrior's dead body starts the tears. This part runs:

'Nevertheless Gudrun could not weep, she was so oppressed at her son's death, and so heavy-hearted over the king's [her husband's] corpse.

'Then spake Goldrand, Giuki's daughter: "Thou knowest not, foster-mother, though thou be wise, how to comfort the young wife." She bade them uncover the king's body, and swept the sheet from off Sigurd, casting it to the ground before his wife's knees. "Look on thy love, lay thy mouth to his lips as if thou wert clasping thy living lord."

'Gudrun cast one look upon him; she saw the king's hair dripping with blood, his keen eyes dead, his breast scored by the sword. Then she fell upon the pillow with loosened hair and reddened cheeks; her tears trickled like rain-drops down to her knee. And now Gudrun, Giuki's daughter, wept so, that the tears soaked thro' her tresses.'

VI.

My dream had never died, or lived again.
As in some mystic middle state I lay;
Seeing I saw not, hearing not I heard;
Tho', if I saw not, yet they told me all
So often that I speak as having seen. 5

For so it seemed, or so they said to me,
That all things grew more tragic and more strange;
That when our side was vanquished, and my cause
For ever lost, there went up a great cry,
'The Prince is slain!' My father heard, and ran 10
In on the lists, and there unlaced my casque
And groveled on my body, and after him
Came Psyche, sorrowing for Aglaïa.

But high upon the palace Ida stood
With Psyche's babe in arm; there on the roofs 15
Like that great dame of Lapidoth she sang.

'In the sixth canto the full strength of the poet is put forth. The field of battle, the wounded knights, the stricken Prince, the agonized father, the slowly relenting Princess, are the themes for powerful and pathetic description. Gradually the mists clear away from Ida's eyes, pity touches her heart, and all the kindly emotions crowd in fast in its train' (Dawson, p. 18).

1. That is, my state of trance had never ceased, notwithstanding my unconsciousness, or else it revived after an interval. Luce remarks (p. 308): 'When . . . the next character begins his long soliloquy, he is somewhat puzzled how to relate events he has not seen — incidents that occurred while he was unconscious, or his ravings while he was delirious in fever.'

15. 'The same expression is used in *The Palace of Art:*

'Our enemies have fallen, have fallen; the seed,
The little seed they laughed at in the dark,
Has risen and cleft the soil, and grown a bulk
Of spanless girth, that lays on every side 20
A thousand arms, and rushes to the sun.

'Our enemies have fallen, have fallen; they came;
The leaves were wet with women's tears; they heard
A noise of songs they would not understand;
They marked it with the red cross to the fall, 25
And would have strown it, and are fallen themselves.

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,
In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,
Beneath branch-work of costly sardonyx,
Sat smiling, *babe in arm.*'

'The reviewers of Tennyson's earlier poems ridiculed this expression unmercifully, comparing it with the "lance in rest" of the romances of chivalry. Some of their criticisms the poet seems to have accepted as just, for he modified the passages complained of, but this phrase he not only retained, but has repeated' (Dawson).

16. Cf. Judges, Chaps. 4 and 5.

17 ff. Tennyson may have utilized such Scriptural suggestions as the following: Ps. 92. 9, 12, 14: 'For lo, thine enemies, O Lord, for lo, thine enemies shall perish. . . . The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. . . . They shall still bring forth fruit in old age;' Hos. 14. 5, 6: 'He shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree;' Ps. 80. 9–11: 'Thou preparedest room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river;' Jer. 46. 22: 'They shall march with an army, and come against her with axes, as hewers of wood.' Cf. *Henry VIII.* V. v. 53–56:

He shall flourish,
And, like a mountain cedar, reach his branches
To all the plains about him; our children's children
Shall see this, and bless Heaven.

21. To the sun. On high.

'Our enemies have fallen, have fallen; they came,
The woodmen with their axes: "lo the tree!
But we will make it faggots for the hearth,
And shape it plank and beam for roof and floor, 30
And boats and bridges for the use of men."

'Our enemies have fallen, have fallen; they struck;
With their own blows they hurt themselves, nor knew
There dwelt an iron nature in the grain;
The glittering axe was broken in their arms, 35
Their arms were shattered to the shoulder blade.

'Our enemies have fallen, but this shall grow
A night of Summer from the heat, a breath
Of Autumn, dropping fruits of power; and rolled
With music in the growing breeze of Time, 40
The tops shall strike from star to star, the fangs
Shall move the stony bases of the world.'

'And now, O maids, behold our sanctuary
Is violate, our laws broken; fear we not
To break them more, in their behoof whose arms 45
Championed our cause and won it with a day
Blanched in our annals, and perpetual feast,
When dames and heroines of the golden year
Shall strip a hundred hollows bare of Spring,
To rain an April of ovation round 50

36. Job 31. 22: 'Then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade.'

40. **Time.** Cf. II. 356; IV. 496; VII. 90, 271.

41. **Fangs.** There is an obsolete sense of *fang*, as 'prong of a divided root.'

Is this song in character? Cf. V. 424–7. To what epoch does such an ode belong?

47. **Blanched.** 'That is, fortunate, propitious; as the Latin *albus* was sometimes used. Cf. Scott, *Guy Mannering:* "The dominie reckoned this as one of the *white* days of his life"' (Rolfe).

48. **Golden year.** Cf. *The Golden Year.*

49. **Spring.** What is the figure?

Their statues, borne aloft, the three; but come,
We will be liberal, since our rights are won.
Let them not lie in the tents with coarse mankind,
Ill nurses; but descend, and proffer these
The brethren of our blood and cause, that there 55
Lie bruised and maimed, the tender ministries
Of female hands and hospitality.'

She spoke, and with the babe yet in her arms,
Descending, burst the great bronze valves, and led
A hundred maids in train across the park. 60
Some cowled, and some bare-headed, on they came,
Their feet in flowers, her loveliest; by them went
The enamored air sighing, and on their curls
From the high tree the blossom wavering fell,
And over them the tremulous isles of light 65
Slided, they moving under shade; but Blanche

53. **Mankind.** *Man* kind. A Shakespearian sense; thus *Tim.* IV. iii. 490–1:

> Because thou art a woman, and disclaim'st
> Flinty *mankind.*

54. **Ill.** Cf. V. 90.
59. **Great bronze valves.** Cf. V. 355.
65–6. See p. xlv.
65. **Tremulous isles of light.** Cf. *In Memoriam* XXIV. 3–4:

> The very source and fount of Day
> Is dashed with wandering isles of night.

Also *Œnone* 176–8:

> And o'er her rounded form
> Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
> Floated the golden sunlights as she moved.

And see Tennyson's letter, p. xl.

Does **tremulous** have any other than a literal meaning here? Cf. with **sighing**, 63.

66. **Slided.** What is the usual form?

At distance followed; so they came; anon
Thro' open field into the lists they wound
Timorously; and as the leader of the herd
That holds a stately fretwork to the sun, 70
And followed up by a hundred airy does,
Steps with a tender foot, light as on air,
The lovely, lordly creature floated on
To where her wounded brethren lay; there stayed;
Knelt on one knee, — the child on one, — and pressed 75
Their hands, and called them dear deliverers,
And happy warriors, and immortal names;
And said 'You shall not lie in the tents, but here,
And nursed by those for whom you fought, and served
With female hands and hospitality.' 80

Then, whether moved by this — or was it chance? —
She passed my way. Up started from my side
The old lion, glaring with his whelpless eye,
Silent; but when she saw me lying stark,
Dishelmed and mute, and motionlessly pale, 85
Cold even to her, she sighed; and when she saw
The haggard father's face and reverend beard
Of grisly twine, all dabbled with the blood

69. **Timorously.** 'This word occupies in the metre of the line the place of a single foot only, the resolution of which into four short syllables that must be hurriedly pronounced indicates the timidity and nervousness with which the girls approach the ghastly scene' (Wallace). See p. xlv.

70. Explain. What effect is intended?

72. See p. xlv.

80. Cf. 57.

81. **Was it chance?** Was it?

83. **Whelpless eye.** Is this a felicitous expression?

84. See p. xlv.

88. **Grisly twine.** Explain.

Of his own son, shuddered, a twitch of pain
Tortured her mouth, and o'er her forehead passed 90
A shadow, and her hue changed, and she said:
'He saved my life; my brother slew him for it.'
No more; at which the king in bitter scorn
Drew from my neck the painting and the tress,
And held them up; she saw them, and a day 95
Rose from the distance on her memory,
When the good Queen, her mother, shore the tress
With kisses, ere the days of Lady Blanche;
And then once more she looked at my pale face;
Till, understanding all the foolish work 100
Of Fancy, and the bitter close of all,
Her iron will was broken in her mind;
Her noble heart was molten in her breast;
She bowed, she set the child on the earth; she laid
A feeling finger on my brows, and presently 105
'O Sire,' she said, 'he lives; he is not dead;
O let me have him with my brethren here
In our own palace; we will tend on him
Like one of these; if so, by any means,
To lighten this great clog of thanks, that make 110
Our progress falter to the woman's goal.'

She said; but at the happy word 'He lives,'
My father stooped, re-fathered o'er my wounds.
So those two foes, above my fallen life,

89–90. See p. xlv.
92. Cf. V. 397.
94. Cf. I. 37–39.
97. **Shore.** Cf. V. 530.
101. **Fancy.** Explain.
102. **Iron will.** Cf. II. 185; V. 340.
114. **Life.** This corresponds in form with German *Leib*, 'body'; here it almost corresponds in sense.

With brow to brow like night and evening, mixed 115
Their dark and gray; while Psyche ever stole
A little nearer, till the babe that by us,
Half-lapt in glowing gauze and golden brede,
Lay like a new-fallen meteor on the grass,
Uncared for, spied its mother, and began 120
A blind and babbling laughter, and to dance
Its body, and reach its fatling innocent arms
And lazy lingering fingers. She the appeal
Brooked not, but clamoring out 'Mine — mine — not yours,
It is not yours, but mine; give me the child!' 125
Ceased all on tremble; piteous was the cry;
So stood the unhappy mother open-mouthed,
And turned each face her way; wan was her cheek
With hollow watch, her blooming mantle torn,
Red grief and mother's hunger in her eye, 130
And down dead-heavy sank her curls, and half
The sacred mother's bosom, panting, burst
The laces toward her babe; but she nor cared
Nor knew it, clamoring on, till Ida heard,
Looked up, and rising slowly from me, stood 135
Erect and silent, striking with her glance
The mother, me, the child; but he that lay
Beside us, Cyril, battered as he was,

118. **Brede.** Embroidery. Cf. Keats, *Lamia* I. 158:

Spoilt all her silver mail, and *golden brede.*

122. **Fatling.** Small and fat. Apparently coined by Tennyson as an adjective, on the analogy of the noun *fatling*, as in Matt. 22. 4.

124. **Brooked.** Endured; almost = resisted.

126. **On tremble.** Cf. 348, and Acts 13. 36.

128. **Each.** Every.

129. **Hollow.** To what noun does it properly belong? To what **red**, in the next line?

132. **Sacred.** Does not modify the next word, but rather the phrase.

Trailed himself up on one knee; then he drew
Her robe to meet his lips, and down she looked 140
At the armed man sideways, pitying, as it seemed,
Or self-involved; but when she learnt his face,
Remembering his ill-omened song, arose
Once more thro' all her height, and o'er him grew
Tall as a figure lengthened on the sand 145
When the tide ebbs in sunshine; and he said:

'O fair and strong and terrible! Lioness
That with your long locks play the Lion's mane!—
But Love and Nature, these are two more terrible
And stronger. See, your foot is on our necks, 150
We vanquished, you the Victor of your will.
What would you more? Give her the child! remain
Orbed in your isolation; he is dead,
Or all as dead; henceforth we let you be;
Win you the hearts of women; and beware 155
Lest, where you seek the common love of these,
The common hate with the revolving wheel
Should drag you down, and some great Nemesis
Break from a darkened future, crowned with fire,
And tread you out for ever; but howsoe'er 160
Fixed in yourself, never in your own arms
To hold your own, deny not hers to her;

144. **Her height.** Cf. II. 27. Must not the Prince have been small of size? He seems always so impressed with the stature of Ida and the proportions of her brothers (V. 245 ff., 264, 488 ff., 509 ff.). Or were they really so large?

149-150. **But Love . . . stronger.** Is not this the teaching of the whole poem?

151. **Of.** According to; at the behest of.

153. **Orbed.** Cf. IV. 129–130.

157. **Common hate.** Cf. II. 439 ff.

158. **Nemesis.** Goddess of retribution.

161. **Never.** Cf. III. 226–232.

Give her the child! O if, I say, you keep
One pulse that beats true woman, if you loved
The breast that fed or arm that dandled you, 165
Or own one port of sense not flint to prayer,
Give her the child! or if you scorn to lay it,
Yourself, in hands so lately clasped with yours,
Or speak to her, your dearest — her one fault
The tenderness, not yours, that could not kill — 170
Give *me* it: *I* will give it her.'
He said;
At first her eye with slow dilation rolled
Dry flame, she listening; after sank and sank,
And, into mournful twilight mellowing, dwelt
Full on the child; she took it: 'Pretty bud! 175
Lily of the vale! half opened bell of the woods!
Sole comfort of my dark hour, when a world
Of traitorous friend and broken system made
No purple in the distance, mystery, —

166. **Port.** Opening, avenue. Hallam Tennyson explains as 'haven, from Latin *portus*' (Wallace), but it must certainly be from *porta*, 'gate.' Cf. *2 Henry IV.* IV. v. 23–24:

> Golden care!
> That keep'st the *ports* of slumber open wide.

And the similar use of *gate*, as in *Hamlet* I. v. 66–67:

> That swift as quicksilver it courses through
> The natural *gates* and alleys of the body.

So *Lear* I. iv. 293–4:

> Beat at this *gate*, thus let thy folly in,
> And thy dear judgment out!

— **Flint.** Cf. 242.

171. What actuates Cyril in this intercession? Is he true to the nature we saw in him at first?

179. Cf. *In Memoriam* XXXVIII. 1–4:

Pledge of a love not to be mine, farewell; 180
These men are hard upon us as of old,
We two must part; and yet how fain was I
To dream thy cause embraced in mine, to think
I might be something to thee, when I felt
Thy helpless warmth about my barren breast 185
In the dead prime! but may thy mother prove
As true to thee as false, false, false to me!
And, if thou needs must bear the yoke, I wish it
Gentle as freedom' — here she kissed it; then —
'All good go with thee! take it, Sir,' and so 190
Laid the soft babe in his hard-mailed hands,
Who turned half-round to Psyche, as she sprang
To meet it with an eye that swum in thanks;
Then felt it sound and whole from head to foot,
And hugged and never hugged it close enough, 195
And in her hunger mouthed and mumbled it,
And hid her bosom with it; after that
Put on more calm, and added suppliantly:

'We two were friends: I go to mine own land
For ever; find some other; as for me, 200
I scarce am fit for your great plans; yet speak to me;
Say one soft word and let me part forgiven.'

But Ida spoke not, rapt upon the child.
Then Arac: 'Ida — 'sdeath! you blame the man;

With weary steps I loiter on,
Tho' always under altered skies
The purple from the distance dies,
My prospect and horizon gone.

180. **Love.** Wedded love.

186. **Dead prime.** The time just before dawn, probably; called *dead* because the vital forces are then at their lowest, and because of the hush.

You wrong yourselves — the woman is so hard 205
Upon the woman. Come, a grace to me!
I am your warrior; I and mine have fought
Your battle; kiss her; take her hand, she weeps;
'Sdeath! I would sooner fight thrice o'er than see it.'

But Ida spoke not, gazing on the ground; 210
And reddening in the furrows of his chin,
And moved beyond his custom, Gama said:

'I 've heard that there is iron in the blood,
And I believe it. Not one word? not one?
Whence drew you this steel temper? not from me, 215
Not from your mother, now a saint with saints.
She said you had a heart — I heard her say it —
"Our Ida has a heart — " just ere she died —
"But see that some one with authority
Be near her still;" and I — I sought for one — 220
All people said she had authority —
The Lady Blanche; much profit! Not one word;
No! tho' your father sues; see how you stand
Stiff as Lot's wife, and all the good knights maimed
I trust that there is no one hurt to death, 225
For your wild whim; and was it then for this,

205–6. The woman . . . woman. 'This unamiable trait results from woman's mission as the conservator of society. In this respect woman's character is very narrow, but she feels instinctively that she cannot afford to be lax in offenses against social laws. Psyche's weakness had in fact broken up Ida's university, and sins against the family tend to break up society' (Dawson).

Does woman's hardness upon woman always flow from this, her mission?

213. Iron. At what period in the world's history would he have heard this?

224. Lot's wife. Cf. Gen. 19. 26.

Was it for this we gave our palace up,
Where we withdrew from summer heats and state,
And had our wine and chess beneath the planes,
And many a pleasant hour with her that's gone, 230
Ere you were born to vex us? Is it kind?
Speak to her, I say; is this not she of whom,
When first she came, all flushed you said to me
Now had you got a friend of your own age,
Now could you share your thought; now should men see 235
Two women faster welded in one love
Than pairs of wedlock; she you walked with, she
You talked with, whole nights long, up in the tower,
Of sine and arc, spheroid and azimuth,
And right ascension, Heaven knows what; and now 240
A word, but one, one little kindly word,
Not one to spare her? out upon you, flint!
You love nor her, nor me, nor any; nay,
You shame your mother's judgment too. Not one?
You will not? well — no heart have you, or such 245
As fancies like the vermin in a nut
Have fretted all to dust and bitterness.'
So said the small king, moved beyond his wont.

But Ida stood, nor spoke, drained of her force
By many a varying influence and so long. 250
Down thro' her limbs a drooping languor wept;

227. **Palace.** Cf. I. 145 ff.
229. **Planes.** Cf. III. 159.
234. **Of your own age.** How old was Ida, then? Cf. II. 92–93.
238–240. Is the state of society which this implies compatible with that of V. 358, 482 ff.? For the technical terms cf. III. 344–5.
247. **Fretted.** Cf. *A Dirge* 9–10:

> Nothing but the small cold worm
> *Fretteth* thine enshrouded form.

251. **Wept.** Why this term?

Her head a little bent; and on her mouth
A doubtful smile dwelt like a clouded moon
In a still water; then brake out my sire,
Lifting his grim head from my wounds: 'O you, 255
Woman, whom we thought woman even now,
And were half fooled to let you tend our son,
Because he might have wished it — but we see
The accomplice of your madness unforgiven,
And think that you might mix his draught with death, 260
When your skies change again; the rougher hand
Is safer; on to the tents; take up the Prince.'

He rose, and while each ear was pricked to attend
A tempest, thro' the cloud that dimmed her broke
A genial warmth and light once more, and shone 265
Thro' glittering drops on her sad friend.

'Come hither,
O Psyche,' she cried out, 'embrace me, come,
Quick while I melt; make reconcilement sure
With one that cannot keep her mind an hour;
Come to the hollow heart they slander so! 270
Kiss and be friends, like children being chid!
I seem no more; *I* want forgiveness too;
I should have had to do with none but maids,
That have no links with men. Ah false but dear,
Dear traitor, too much loved, why? — why? — Yet see, 275
Before these kings we embrace you yet once more
With all forgiveness, all oblivion,
And trust, not love, you less.

And now, O Sire,
Grant me your son, to nurse, to wait upon him,

255. Grim head. Cf. 87–88.
267. What influence has at length made Ida relent?
278. And now. Does this throw any light on the last question?

Like mine own brother. For my debt to him, 280
This nightmare weight of gratitude, I know it;
Taunt me no more; yourself and yours shall have
Free adit; we will scatter all our maids
Till happier times each to her proper hearth;
What use to keep them here — now? grant my prayer. 285
Help, father, brother, help; speak to the king;
Thaw this male nature to some touch of that
Which kills me with myself, and drags me down
From my fixed height to mob me up with all
The soft and milky rabble of womankind, 290
Poor weakling even as they are.'

Passionate tears
Followed; the king replied not; Cyril said:
'Your brother, Lady, — Florian, — ask for him
Of your great Head — for he is wounded too —
That you may tend upon him with the prince.' 295
'Ay so,' said Ida with a bitter smile,
'Our laws are broken; let him enter too.'
Then Violet, she that sang the mournful song,
And had a cousin tumbled on the plain,
Petitioned too for him. 'Ay so,' she said, 300
'I stagger in the stream; I cannot keep
My heart an eddy from the brawling hour;
We break our laws with ease, but let it be.'
'Ay so?' said Blanche: 'Amazed am I to hear
Your Highness; but Your Highness breaks with ease 305
The law Your Highness did not make; 't was I.

281. **Nightmare weight.** Cf. 110.

283. **Adit.** Access, entrance; a rare word in this sense.

288. **Kills me with myself.** Destroys my factitious hardness with the true womanly nature which has been in abeyance.

289. **Mob me up.** Why doesn't Ida take more kindly to her own womanly nature? Is there any good reason why she should so despise it?

I had been wedded wife, I knew mankind,
And blocked them out; but these men came to woo
Your Highness — verily I think to win.'

So she, and turned askance a wintry eye; 310
But Ida, with a voice that like a bell
Tolled by an earthquake in a trembling tower,
Rang ruin, answered full of grief and scorn.

'Fling our doors wide! all, all, not one, but all;
Not only he, but by my mother's soul, 315
Whatever man lies wounded, friend or foe,
Shall enter, if he will. Let our girls flit,
Till the storm die! but had you stood by us,
The roar that breaks the Pharos from his base
Had left us rock. She fain would sting us too, 320
But shall not. Pass, and mingle with your likes.
We brook no further insult, but are gone.'

311–3. **Like a bell . . . ruin.** 'It would be hard to conceive a more impressive simile to denote the final acknowledgment of complete surrender. A tower can resist most natural shocks, but an earthquake is supreme. Ida, the intrepid, the fierce, the terrible, who "stood foursquare to all the winds that blew," is overthrown at last by a mightier influence than any effort of physical force or dread of personal danger. And herself, as she reels, clashes the alarum of her own doom' (Wallace).

313. After this, the first two editions have a much longer speech.

318. **Had you stood by us.** Was this the real reason that the plan was abandoned — that Lady Blanche had weakened or had been disloyal?

319. **Pharos.** Lighthouse; cf. 312.

321. **Shall not.** Had she not? After this line the first two editions insert these, among others:

> Go, help the half-brained dwarf, Society,
> To find low motives unto noble deeds,
> To fix all doubt upon the darker side.

Is this a just characterization?

She turned ; the very nape of her white neck
Was rosed with indignation ; but the Prince
Her brother came ; the king her father charmed 325
Her wounded soul with words ; nor did mine own
Refuse her proffer, lastly gave his hand.

Then us they lifted up, dead weights, and bare
Straight to the doors ; to them the doors gave way
Groaning, and in the Vestal entry shrieked 330
The virgin marble under iron heels ;
And on they moved and gained the hall, and there
Rested ; but great the crush was, and each base,
To left and right, of those tall columns, drowned
In silken fluctuation and the swarm 335
Of female whisperers ; at the further end
Was Ida by the throne, the two great cats
Close by her, like supporters on a shield,
Bow-backed with fear ; but in the centre stood
The common men with rolling eyes ; amazed 340
They glared upon the women, and aghast
The women stared at these, all silent, save
When armor clashed or jingled ; while the day,
Descending, struck athwart the hall, and shot
A flying splendor out of brass and steel, 345
That o'er the statues leapt from head to head,

330. See p. xlv. — **Groaning . . . shrieked.** With what feelings are the doors and entry credited, and why?

332. **Hall.** Cf. II. 17, 61, 416; IV. 253, 456.

333. See p. xlv.

334. **Those tall columns.** Cf. II. 412.

337. **Cats.** Cf. II. 17; III. 165, 170.

338. **Supporters.** Look up the coats of arms of some of our States, and note the supporters on each side.

339. **With fear.** Why?

344. **Athwart the hall.** Cf. II. 449; was that the same room?

Now fired an angry Pallas on the helm,
Now set a wrathful Dian's moon on flame;
And now and then an echo started up,
And shuddering fled from room to room, and died 350
Of fright in far apartments.

Then the voice
Of Ida sounded, issuing ordinance;
And me they bore up the broad stairs, and thro'
The long-laid galleries, past a hundred doors,
To one deep chamber shut from sound, and due 355
To languid limbs and sickness; left me in it;
And others otherwhere they laid; and all
That afternoon a sound arose of hoof
And chariot, many a maiden passing home
Till happier times; but some were left of those 360
Held sagest; and the great lords out and in,
From those two hosts that lay beside the walls,
Walked at their will; and everything was changed.

347–8. Pallas was the goddess of wisdom, and Diana of purity. Why are they now represented as 'angry' and 'wrathful'? — Try to see a picture of these goddesses as represented in marble.

351. Of fright. Why so represented?

361. Held sagest. Cf. VII. 69–71.

Ask me no more; the moon may draw the sea;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;
But O too fond, when have I answered thee?
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more; what answer should I give?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye;
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more; thy fate and mine are sealed;
I strove against the stream, and all in vain;
Let the great river take me to the main;
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;
Ask me no more.

'This song is equally musical and monosyllabic. Of 125 words in it all are monosyllables except *six*, and those are disyllables' (Rolfe).

Wallace says: 'This feature imparts a peculiar stateliness to the composition, emphasizing the solemnity of its tone without impairing its melody, though the latter is of a more sombre character than that which pervades the lighter and more rapid movement of polysyllabic songs, such as (to take an instance written in the same metre) *A Welcome to Her Royal Highness Maric Alexandrovna, Duchess of Edinburgh.* This peculiar mournful and reserved tone is strikingly noticeable in such of Shakespeare's Sonnets as are constructed after this monosyllabic type.'

Is this more, or less, exactly fitted to its place than any other of the interspersed songs?

1-3. Cf. Shelley, *Love's Philosophy:*

The fountains mingle with the river,
And the rivers with the ocean;
The winds of heaven mix for ever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle;
Why not I with thine?

12. Dawson says: 'See Shakespeare, *Venus and Adonis*, for a similar line:

And all in vain you strive against the stream.'

VII.

So was their sanctuary violated,
So their fair college turned to hospital;
At first with all confusion ; by and by
Sweet order lived again, with other laws ;
A kindlier influence reigned ; and everywhere 5
Low voices, with the ministering hand,
Hung round the sick ; the maidens came, they talked,
They sang, they read ; till she not fair began
To gather light, and she that was, became
Her former beauty treble ; and to and fro 10
With books, with flowers, with angel offices,
Like creatures native unto gracious act,
And in their own clear element, they moved.

But sadness on the soul of Ida fell,
And hatred of her weakness, blent with shame. 15
Old studies failed ; seldom she spoke ; but oft
Clomb to the roofs, and gazed alone for hours
On that disastrous leaguer, swarms of men
Darkening her female field ; void was her use,

Luce says (p. 228) that this canto contains within itself — 'not humor, for it is the "solemn close" — but almost all the other excellencies of poetry ; and it contains nothing but such excellencies.'

4. **Sweet order.** Why **sweet?**
6. **Low voices.** Cf. *King Lear* V. iii. 273–4 :

> Her voice was ever soft,
> Gentle, and low — an excellent thing in woman.

8–10. **She . . . treble.** How often this may be observed !
15. Her pride is not yet conquered.
18. **Leaguer.** The army *beleaguering* the place.
19. **Void was her use.** Cf. *Aylmer's Field:*

> The gentle creature, shut from all
> Her charitable use.

And she as one that climbs a peak to gaze 20
O'er land and main, and sees a great black cloud
Drag inward from the deeps, a wall of night,
Blot out the slope of sea from verge to shore,
And suck the blinding splendor from the sand,
And quenching lake by lake and tarn by tarn 25
Expunge the world; so fared she gazing there;
So blackened all her world in secret, blank
And waste it seemed and vain; till down she came,
And found fair peace once more among the sick.

And twilight dawned; and morn by morn the lark 30
Shot up and shrilled in flickering gyres, but I
Lay silent in the muffled cage of life;
And twilight gloomed; and broader-grown the bowers
Drew the great night into themselves, and Heaven,
Star after star, arose and fell; but I, 35

Boynton says: 'This, like most genuinely poetic expressions, loses force in proportion as it gains explicitness, when it is turned into prose. Her life was empty of its usual occupations, and she had as yet found nothing to take their place. Her being was already stirred by the inward pleading of emotions which she had abjured; but she had no thought, as yet, of laying aside her practical aims.'

Bristed remarks (*Amer. Rev.* VIII. 37): 'Meaning that "her occupation was gone," I suppose; but it is not easy to get that sense, or any sense, out of the words.'

20–26. Collins says: 'The magnificent simile is taken literally from *Iliad* IV. 275: "As when a goatherd from some hill peak sees a cloud coming across the deep with the blast of the west wind behind it; and to him, being as he is afar, it seems blacker, even as pitch, as it goes along the deep, bringing a great whirlwind." Compare, too, Lucretius (VI. 256 *sqq.*), who has imitated the same simile.' But cf. Tennyson's own statement, p. xxxvii.

23. Verge. Cf. IV. 29.

25. Tarn. Small mountain lake.

33. Gloomed. Cf. *Ulysses* 45:

There gloom the dark broad seas.

Deeper than those weird doubts could reach me, lay
Quite sundered from the moving Universe,
Nor knew what eye was on me, nor the hand
That nursed me, more than infants in their sleep.

But Psyche tended Florian; with her oft 40
Melissa came; for Blanche had gone, but left
Her child among us, willing she should keep
Court-favor; here and there the small bright head,
A light of healing, glanced about the couch,
Or thro' the parted silks the tender face 45
Peeped, shining in upon the wounded man
With blush and smile, a medicine in themselves
To wile the length from languorous hours, and draw
The sting from pain; nor seemed it strange that soon
He rose up whole, and those fair charities 50
Joined at her side; nor stranger seemed that hearts
So gentle, so employed, should close in love,
Than when two dewdrops on the petal shake
To the same sweet air, and tremble deeper down,
And slip at once all-fragrant into one. 55

Less prosperously the second suit obtained
At first with Psyche. Not tho' Blanche had sworn
That after that dark night among the fields
She needs must wed him for her own good name;
Not tho' he built upon the babe restored; 60
Nor tho' she liked him, yielded she, but feared
To incense the Head once more; till on a day
When Cyril pleaded, Ida came behind
Seen but of Psyche; on her foot she hung

36. **Weird doubts.** Cf. IV. 538, 548.
51. **Joined.** Joined in.
58. Cf. V. 47–48.
60. Cf. V. 101–2.

A moment, and she heard, at which her face 65
A little flushed, and she passed on; but each
Assumed from thence a half-consent involved
In stillness, plighted troth, and were at peace.

Nor only these; Love in the sacred halls
Held carnival at will, and flying struck 70
With showers of random sweet on maid and man.
Nor did her father cease to press my claim,
Nor did mine own, now reconciled; nor yet
Did those twin brothers, risen again and whole;
Nor Arac, satiate with his victory. 75

But I lay still, and with me oft she sat;
Then came a change; for sometimes I would catch
Her hand in wild delirium, gripe it hard,
And fling it like a viper off, and shriek,
'You are not Ida;' clasp it once again, 80
And call her Ida, tho' I knew her not,
And call her sweet, as if in irony,
And call her hard and cold, which seemed a truth;
And still she feared that I should lose my mind,
And often she believed that I should die; 85
Till out of long frustration of her care,
And pensive tendance in the all-weary noons,
And watches in the dead, the dark, when clocks
Throbbed thunder thro' the palace floors, or called
On flying Time from all their silver tongues — 90
And out of memories of her kindlier days,
And sidelong glances at my father's grief,

71. **Random sweet.** What sorts of objects are flung at carnival time?

90. Cf. I. 213–4.

91–97. For such sequences of lines beginning with the same word, cf. Prol. 44–47, II. 56–58, IV. 284–8, and VII. 81–85.

And at the happy lovers heart in heart —
And out of hauntings of my spoken love,
And lonely listenings to my muttered dream, 95
And often feeling of the helpless hands,
And wordless broodings on the wasted cheek —
From all, a closer interest flourished up,
Tenderness touch by touch ; and last, to these,
Love, like an Alpine harebell hung with tears 100
By some cold morning glacier ; frail at first
And feeble, all unconscious of itself,
But such as gathered color day by day.

Last I woke sane, but well-nigh close to death
For weakness; it was evening; silent light 105
Slept on the painted walls, wherein were wrought
Two grand designs; for on one side arose
The women up in wild revolt, and stormed
At the Oppian law. Titanic shapes, they crammed
The forum, and half-crushed among the rest 110

100. **Love.** 'Notice how the position of this word, a monosyllable at the beginning of the line, followed by a pause, accentuates its importance as the climax of this long enumeration ; cf. 290, below' (Wallace).

109. **Oppian law.** 'This was a sumptuary law passed during the time of the direst distress of Rome, when Hannibal was almost at the gates [B.C. 215]. It enacted that no woman should wear a gay-colored dress, or have more than half an ounce of gold ornaments, and that none should approach within a mile of any city or town in a car drawn by horses [unless on account of public sacrifices]. The war being concluded, and the emergency over, the women demanded the repeal of the law. They gained one consul, but Cato, the other one, resisted. The women rose, thronged the streets and forum, and harassed the magistrates until the law was repealed [B.C. 195]' (Dawson). The story is related by Livy, Bk. XXXIV.

110. **Forum.** Livy XXXIV. 1 : 'Omnis vias urbis aditusque *in forum* obsidebant.'

A dwarf-like Cato cowered. On the other side
Hortensia spoke against the tax; behind,
A train of dames; by axe and eagle sat,
With all their foreheads drawn in Roman scowls,
And half the wolf's-milk curdled in their veins, 115
The fierce triumvirs; and before them paused
Hortensia pleading; angry was her face.

I saw the forms; I knew not where I was;
They did but look like hollow shows; nor more
Sweet Ida; palm to palm she sat; the dew 120
Dwelt in her eyes, and softer all her shape
And rounder seemed; I moved; I sighed; a touch
Came round my wrist, and tears upon my hand;
Then all for languor and self-pity ran
Mine down my face, and with what life I had, 125
And like a flower that cannot all unfold,
So drenched it is with tempest, to the sun,
Yet, as it may, turns toward him, I on her
Fixed my faint eyes, and uttered whisperingly:

'If you be what I think you, some sweet dream, 130
I would but ask you to fulfil yourself;

111. **Dwarf-like.** So represented in order to enhance the glory of his opponents, just as they were depicted as 'Titanic.'—**Cowered.** In reality, hardly.

112. **Hortensia.** 'Daughter of the orator Q. Hortensius. She partook of his eloquence, and spoke before the triumvirs in behalf of the wealthy matrons, when these were threatened with a special tax to defray the expenses of the war against Brutus and Cassius.' This must have been B.C. 43.

113. **Axe and eagle.** Standing respectively for the civil and the military power.

115. **Wolf's-milk.** Romulus and Remus were said to have been suckled by a she-wolf.

119. **Hollow shows.** Cf. III. 169; V. 467.

120. **Dew.** Cf. II. 295–6.

But if you be that Ida whom I knew,
I ask you nothing; only, if a dream,
Sweet dream, be perfect. I shall die to-night.
Stoop down and seem to kiss me ere I die.' 135

I could no more, but lay like one in trance,
That hears his burial talked of by his friends,
And cannot speak, nor move, nor make one sign,
But lies and dreads his doom. She turned; she paused;
She stooped; and out of languor leapt a cry; 140
Leapt fiery Passion from the brinks of death;
And I believed that in the living world
My spirit closed with Ida's at the lips;
Till back I fell, and from mine arms she rose
Glowing all over noble shame; and all 145
Her falser self slipped from her like a robe,
And left her woman, lovelier in her mood
Than in her mold that other, when she came
From barren deeps to conquer all with love;
And down the streaming crystal dropped; and she 150

143. Cf. *Locksley Hall* 38:

> And our spirits rushed together at the touching of the lips.

146. Note how this serves also to introduce the picture of the unclothed Aphrodite.

147. **Mood.** Effectively contrasted with **mold.**

148 ff. Bristed observed (*Am. Rev.* VIII. 36) that Tennyson perhaps had in mind the shorter Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite, which he quotes.

Bayard Taylor thus criticizes: 'The italicized passage [150–4] contains an exquisite, rapid picture of Aphrodite, floating along the wave to her home at Paphos; but what must we think of the lover who, in relating the supreme moment of his passion, could turn aside to interpolate it? Its very loveliness emphasizes his utter forgetfulness of the governing theme; and, whether the situation be called dramatic or not, it is amenable to the strictest laws of dramatic art.' Cf. Stedman, *Victorian Poets*, pp. 225–6.

Far-fleeted by the purple island-sides,
Naked, a double light in air and wave,
To meet her Graces, where they decked her out
For worship without end; nor end of mine,
Stateliest, for thee! But mute she glided forth, 155
Nor glanced behind her, and I sank and slept,
Filled thro' and thro' with Love, a happy sleep.

Deep in the night I woke; she, near me, held
A volume of the Poets of her land;
There to herself, all in low tones, she read. 160

'Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white;
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font;
The fire-fly wakens; waken thou with me.

Now droops the milkwhite peacock like a ghost, 165
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the Earth all Danaë to the stars,
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

153. **Graces.** The Homeric Hymn has 'Hours':

Her lovingly the golden Hours received,
And clad in robes immortal; and they set
Upon her head divine a golden crown, etc.

154–5. **Nor . . . thee.** A beautiful transition.

155. **Stateliest.** How does this accord with previous descriptions of Ida? Note its relevancy to the mention of Aphrodite.

159. **Poets.** Cf. II. 164.

163. **Winks.** A graphic term.

165. 'Darwin, in his *Animals and Plants under Domestication*, vol. i. p. 305, speaks of a white variety of peacock. . . The simile is not a happy one, however' (Dawson).

167. **All Danaë to the stars.** 'Open to their light falling upon her in a golden shower, like that in which Jupiter came down to visit Danaë' (Rolfe).

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me. 170

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake;
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me.'

I heard her turn the page; she found a small 175
Sweet Idyl, and once more, as low, she read.

'Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height;
What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang),
In height and cold, the splendor of the hills?
But cease to move so near the heavens, and cease 180
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted pine,
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire;

170. **Furrow.** Cf. III. 2.

176. **Sweet Idyl.** 'Possibly, so far as objective beauty and finish are concerned, the nonpareil of the whole poem. It is an imitation of the apostrophe of Polyphemus to Galatea, and never were the antique and modern feeling more finely contrasted: the one, clear, simple, childlike, perfect (in the Greek) as regards melody and tone; the other, nobler, more intellectual, the antique body with the modern soul. The substitution of the mountains for the sea, as the haunt of the beloved nymph, is the Laureate's only departure from the *material* employed by Theocritus' (Stedman, *Victorian Poets*, p. 228).

'The shepherd is calling his love from the chill and barren, though lofty and beautiful heights, down into the fruitful and smiling valleys of practical life, where she may find happiness by imparting it, and by sharing its duties' (Dawson).

178–9. Stedman compares Theocritus (as above):

> Now will I learn to swim, that I may see
> What pleasure thus to dwell in water depths
> Thou findest!

182. **Sparkling spire.** The sharp pinnacled rocks of the Alpine mountains are meant, locally called 'needles' (Aiguilles). For the Alpine scenery, Wallace compares Byron's *Manfred* I. ii, and Coleridge's *Hymn before Sunrise*.

And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
For Love is of the valley, come thou down
And find him; by the happy threshold he, 185
Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,
Or red with spirted purple of the vats,
Or foxlike in the vine; nor cares to walk
With Death and Morning on the Silver Horns,
Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine, 190
Nor find him dropped upon the firths of ice
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls
To roll the torrent out of dusky doors.
But follow; let the torrent dance thee down
To find him in the valley; let the wild 195
Lean-headed eagles yelp alone; and leave

188. **Foxlike in the vine.** 'A reminiscence of the Song of Solomon: "Take me the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines." Or of Theocritus more probably, *Idyll* I: "Two foxes, one is roaming up and down the rows, spoiling the ripe grapes"' (Dawson).

189. 'In the early editions we find *Silver Horns*, but all the more recent ones print "silver horns." The former is, of course, to be preferred, on account of the obvious reference to the Silberhorn, one of the peaks or spurs of the Jungfrau, and markedly the most silvery-white part of the summit, as seen from Interlachen and its vicinity.

'*Morning* walks on the mountains here, as "o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill" in *Hamlet* (I. i. 167); and *Death* is her companion because life has no home on those "Alpine summits cold," or must face Death in attempting to scale them. Dawson thinks that the poet introduces *Death* into the picture because the mountains in the early light "have a chill ashen hue, as of deathly pallor"; but our explanation is simpler, and has been approved by the poet' (Rolfe).

191–3. **The firths . . . doors.** 'This,' says Bayard Taylor, 'is almost incomprehensible to one who has not looked with his own bodily eyes upon the Mer de Glace. The poem, in fact, abounds with instances where the expression as a whole is weakened and confused by the author's tendency to make each particular complete, without reference to its relation to others.'

193. **Dusky doors.** Dark caves of ice, at the lower end of the glaciers.

196–7. **Leave . . . slope.** Stedman compares Theocritus, *Idyll* XI. 43:

Leave the green sea to stretch itself to shore.

The monstrous ledges there to slope, and spill
Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke,
That like a broken purpose waste in air;
So waste not thou; but come; for all the vales 200
Await thee; azure pillars of the hearth
Arise to thee; the children call, and I,
Thy shepherd, pipe, and sweet is every sound,
Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet:
Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn, 205

197. Note how the use of the verbs of motion animates the passage.

198. Cf. *The Lotos-Eaters* 8:

> And, like a downward smoke, the slender stream
> Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

The Staubbach, in the valley of Lauterbrunnen, derives its name from this phenomenon, though 'Staub' is 'dust,' and not 'smoke.'

199. 'This simile is remarkable as being an illustration of a fact in external Nature by reference to a moral phenomenon in man, the reverse being the common rule. There is a parallel case in the first book of Virgil's *Æneid*, where Neptune's imperious abatement of a storm at sea is compared to the power that a grave and reverend public character has of allaying the excitement of a turbulent mob' (Wallace).

201. Azure pillars of the hearth. See p. xxiii.

203–4. Collins remarks: 'The repetition of "sweet" is precisely: . . . "Sweet is the voice of the heifer, sweet her breath, sweet, too, the voice of the calf" ([Theocritus], *Idyll* VIII).'

205–7. 'Who, after three such lines, will talk of English as a harsh and clumsy language, and seek in the effeminate and monotonous Italian for expressive melody of sound? Who cannot *hear* in them the rapid rippling of the water, the stately calmness of the wood-dove's note, and, in the repetition of short syllables and soft liquids in the last line, the

> Murmuring of innumerable bees?'

(Charles Kingsley.)

'In these last lines there is an overpowering imaginative charm, something almost magical in its bewitchment, which makes us think of the words of Keats, that to him a fine phrase was an intoxicating delight. It is a melody, the finest and most magical melody of which words are capable' (Dawson, *Makers of Modern English*, p. 174).

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees.'

So she low-toned; while with shut eyes I lay
Listening; then looked. Pale was the perfect face;

'Observe in the first of these lines how the striking accumulation of additional short syllables expresses the quick rippling movement of the water, and in the other two how the gentle cooing of the doves and humming of the bees seem reproduced in the dominance of the soft 'o' and 'u' sounds and the profusion of liquid labials' (Wallace).

In connection with the foregoing, we may note what Knowles says of Tennyson (*Nineteenth Century* XXXIII. 171): 'His acquaintance with all previous poetry was unlimited, and his memory of it amazing. He would quote again and again with complete delight the passages which were his favorites, stopping and calling upon his hearer to consider the beauty of this or that line, and repeating it to admire it the more. His reading was always in a grand, deep, measured voice, and was rather intoning on a few notes than speaking. It was like a sort of musical thunder, far off or near — loud-rolling or "sweet and low" — according to the subject, and once heard could never be forgotten. It made no difference whence a fine line or passage came; it struck him equally with pleasure, when he heard or came across it, whether it were another man's or his own. He would pause in precisely the same way to call out "That 's magnificent!" "What a line!" "Is n't that splendid?" whether reading Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, or himself. He was struck by the beauty of the art without thinking for one moment of the artist. . . . He often insisted that the grandest music in the English language was in Milton, and especially in the first book of *Paradise Lost*, and he would repeatedly chant out with the deepest admiration, as the finest of all, the passage [I. 446–457]. As a single line he said he knew hardly any to exceed for charm

Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams,

unless it were Wordsworth's great line in *Tintern Abbey:*

Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns.'

206. Collins compares Virgil's (*Ecl.* I. 58):

Nec gemere aeria cessabit turtur ab ulmo.

208. Low-toned. Cf. 6.

209–212. Cf. IV. 363 ff.

The bosom with long sighs labored; and meek 210
Seemed the full lips, and mild the luminous eyes;
And the voice trembled, and the hand. She said
Brokenly, that she knew it, she had failed
In sweet humility; had failed in all;
That all her labor was but as a block 215
Left in the quarry; but she still were loth,
She still were loth to yield herself to one
That wholly scorned to help their equal rights
Against the sons of men and barbarous laws.
She prayed me not to judge their cause from her 220
That wronged it, sought far less for truth than power
In knowledge; something wild within her breast,
A greater than all knowledge, beat her down.
And she had nursed me there from week to week;
Much had she learnt in little time. In part 225
It was ill counsel had misled the girl
To vex true hearts; yet was she but a girl—
'Ah fool, and made myself a Queen of farce!
When comes another such? never, I think,
Till the sun drop, dead, from the signs.'
Her voice 230
Choked, and her forehead sank upon her hands,
And her great heart thro' all the faultful Past
Went sorrowing in a pause I dared not break;
Till notice of a change in the dark world

213. See p. xlvi.
218. **Equal.** Cf. I. 130; IV. 56.
219. **Barbarous laws.** Cf. II. 117.
226. Whose?
230. **Signs.** Of the zodiac.
234–7. 'When the dawn of love in the Princess's heart is beginning, the early dawn of nature to which he compares it was never more fully or more tenderly imagined than in these lines of lovely simplicity' (Brooke, *Tennyson*, p. 160).

Was lisped about the acacias, and a bird, 235
That early woke to feed her little ones,
Sent from a dewy breast a cry for light;
She moved, and at her feet the volume fell.

'Blame not thyself too much,' I said, 'nor blame
Too much the sons of men and barbarous laws; 240
These were the rough ways of the world till now.
Henceforth thou hast a helper, me, that know
The woman's cause is man's; they rise or sink
Together, dwarfed or godlike, bond or free;
For she that out of Lethe scales with man 245
The shining steps of Nature, shares with man
His nights, his days, moves with him to one goal,
Stays all the fair young planet in her hands—

239–280. **Blame . . . be.** Memorize.

245. **Lethe.** Tennyson here, as in *The Two Voices*, follows Virgil (*Æneid* VI. 748–751) and Plato (*Republic*) in postulating 'that the souls of the dead, after a due course of purification, are made to drink of the water of the river Lethe (oblivion), that they may return to animate new bodies; in utter forgetfulness of their former existence on earth.' Thus, in *The Two Voices*, he says:

> As old mythologies relate,
> Some draught of Lethe might await
> The slipping thro' from state to state.

Here, however, the poet means scarcely more by 'and of Lethe' than 'from the moment of birth.'

246. **Shining steps.** Cf. *In Memoriam* LV. 15–16:

> The great world's altar-stairs,
> That slope through darkness up to God.

248. **Fair young planet.** 'It is difficult to discover the astronomical allusion here, or what the precise appropriateness of the word *planet* may be when used to signify the young generation of mankind. Evidently the poet means to say that the influence of the mothers of any given generation of men shapes the course of the world during that generation' (Dawson).

If she be small, slight-natured, miserable,
How shall men grow? But work no more alone! 250
Our place is much; as far as in us lies
We two will serve them both in aiding her —
Will clear away the parasitic forms
That seem to keep her up, but drag her down —
Will leave her space to burgeon out of all 255
Within her — let her make herself her own
To give or keep, to live and learn and be
All that not harms distinctive womanhood.
For woman is not undeveloped man,

One might think of 'fair young planet' as this beautiful world of Nature and of men, still in its infancy, and to be determined in its future course by woman (cf. Con. 77–79). See *The Day-Dream* 231–2:

> For we are ancients of the earth,
> And in the morning of the times.

It will be noted that there is no explicit mention in this sentence of children; it is only of man and woman. Lines 245–7 are a series of parallelisms: 'scales with man,' 'shares with man,' 'moves with him'; to introduce abruptly the thought of another generation at this point, and in obscure periphrasis, might therefore be regarded as inartistic. I do not venture to decide; the line is a difficult one.

251. Our place is much. 'Noblesse oblige.'

254. Cf. Prol. 127–8; II. 47–54.

255. Burgeon. Burst forth, as a plant sprouts.

258. Note Tennyson's wise limitation.

259 ff. 'This is but to give poetic expression to very evident things, but it is also to give expression to the only "thinkable" philosophy of the matter. Tennyson has added nothing to our knowledge, but he has beautifully summed for us, as an artist should, the teaching of Nature, our mother' (Dixon, *Tennyson Primer*, p. 65). Cf. Brooke, *Tennyson*, p. 162:

'It [beauty] is first in Tennyson's, as it ought to be in every artist's heart. The subject-matter is bent to the necessity of beauty. The knowledge displayed in it, the various theories concerning womanhood, the choice of scenery, the events, all are chosen and arranged so as to render it possible to enshrine them in beautiful shapes.

But diverse; could we make her as the man, 260
Sweet Love was slain; his dearest bond is this,
Not like to like, but like in difference.
Yet in the long years liker must they grow;
The man be more of woman, she of man;
He gain in sweetness and in moral height, 265
Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world;
She, mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,
Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind;
Till at the last she set herself to man,
Like perfect music unto noble words; 270
And so these twain, upon the skirts of Time,
Sit side by side, full-summed in all their powers,
Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,
Self-reverent each and reverencing each,
Distinct in individualities, 275
But like each other even as those who love.
Then comes the statelier Eden back to men;
Then reign the world's great bridals, chaste and calm;
Then springs the crowning race of humankind.

The general direction toward loveliness is never lost sight of by the poet. It is not that moral aims are neglected, or the increase of human good, or the heightening of truth, or the declaring of knowledge; but it is that all these things are made subservient to the manifestation of beauty. It is the artist's way, and it is the highest way.'

263. Luce says (p. 230): 'Already women are less maternal, less wifely, less lovable. . . . Our remaining reflection will be a judicial one: "It is indispensable to acquire the advantage; it is lamentable to incur the evil."'

268. This had not been Ida's view; cf. I. 136.

271. Upon the skirts of Time. In some distant age. Not very clear or felicitous.

274. Self-reverent. Cf. *Œnone* 142–3:

> Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
> These three alone lead life to sovereign power.

May these things be!'
Sighing she spoke: 'I fear 280
They will not.'
'Dear, but let us type them now
In our own lives, and this proud watchword rest
Of equal; seeing either sex alone
Is half itself, and in true marriage lies
Nor equal, nor unequal; each fulfils 285
Defect in each, and always thought in thought,
Purpose in purpose, will in will, they grow,
The single pure and perfect animal,

279. Crowning race. Cf. the close of *In Memoriam:*

> The crowning race
> Of those that, eye to eye, shall look
> On knowledge....
>
> No longer half-akin to brute,
> For all we thought, and loved, and did,
> And hoped, and suffered, is but seed
> Of what in them is flower and fruit.

281–290. Dear . . . life. Memorize.

282. This proud watchword. Which had been much employed in the poem.

284. Is half itself. A Platonic doctrine, oddly developed by Aristophanes as one of the speakers in the *Symposium* (189–193). Here is a specimen: 'Each of us, when separated, is but the indenture of a man, having one side only, like a flat fish, and he is always looking for his other half.... And when one of them finds his other half, . . . the pair are lost in an amazement of love and friendship and intimacy, and one will not be out of the other's sight, as I may say, even for a moment.'

288. Animal. 'Ordinarily, when this word is applied to a human being, it is intended in a depreciatory sense, as of one whose higher nature has been swamped by his merely brute passions. Here there is of course no such connotation, the word being used in its original sense of "living creature." It is so found in Dante, *Inferno* V. 88, where Francesca addresses the Poet:

> O animal grazioso e benigno,

The two-celled heart beating, with one full stroke,
Life.'
And again sighing she spoke: 'A dream 290
That once was mine! what woman taught you this?'

'Alone,' I said, 'from earlier than I know,
Immersed in rich foreshadowings of the world,
I loved the woman; he that doth not, lives
A drowning life, besotted in sweet self, 295
Or pines in sad experience worse than death,
Or keeps his winged affections clipped with crime;
Yet was there one thro' whom I loved her, one
Not learned, save in gracious household ways,
Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants, 300
No angel, but a dearer being, all dipped
In angel instincts, breathing Paradise,
Interpreter between the Gods and men,
Who looked all native to her place, and yet
On tiptoe seemed to touch upon a sphere 305
Too gross to tread; and all male minds perforce
Swayed to her from their orbits as they moved,
And girdled her with music. Happy he

i.e., "O creature gracious and benign." We may compare also Shakespeare's *Hamlet* II. ii. 312: "A man! . . . the paragon of animals!"' (Wallace).

289–290. See p. xlvi.

290. Bristed criticizes the metre (*Amer. Rev.* VIII. 37).

292–312. Alone . . . day. Memorize.

297. Cf. *Aylmer's Field* 373–7:

> He believed
> This filthy marriage-hindering Mammon made
> The harlot of the cities; nature crossed
> Was mother of the foul adulteries
> That saturate soul with body.

307–8. Swayed . . . music. An allusion to the music of the spheres. Cf. *Merchant of Venice* V. i. 58–65; *Twelfth Night* III. i. 115; *As You Like It* II. vii. 6.

With such a mother! faith in womankind
Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high 310
Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and fall
He shall not blind his soul with clay.'
'But I,'
Said Ida, tremulously; 'so all unlike —
It seems you love to cheat yourself with words;
This mother is your model. I have heard 315
Of your strange doubts; they well might be; I seem
A mockery to my own self. Never, Prince;
You cannot love me.'
'Nay, but thee,' I said,
'From yearlong poring on thy pictured eyes,
Ere seen I loved, and loved thee seen, and saw 320
Thee woman thro' the crust of iron moods
That masked thee from men's reverence up, and forced
Sweet love on pranks of saucy boyhood; now,
Given back to life, to life indeed, thro' thee,
Indeed I love; the new day comes, the light 325
Dearer for night, as dearer thou for faults
Lived over; lift thine eyes; my doubts are dead,
My haunting sense of hollow shows; the change,
This truthful change in thee has killed it. Dear,
Look up, and let thy nature strike on mine, 330
Like yonder morning on the blind half-world;
Approach and fear not; breathe upon my brows;

309. **Mother.** Cf. I. 22–24; V. 159, 184–9, 398. With the foregoing passage may be compared Wordsworth's 'She was a phantom of delight,' and Lowell's *My Love.*

318. **Thee.** Why are these forms used from here to the end of the canto?

323. **On.** Into. — **Pranks.** The intrusion into the College. — **Saucy.** Cf. V. 384.

331. **Blind.** Dark, unlighted.

332. **Approach and fear not.** Why *should* she fear? Cf. this with V. 134.

In that fine air I tremble, all the past
Melts mist-like into this bright hour, and this
Is morn to more, and all the rich to-come 335
Reels, as the golden Autumn woodland reels
Athwart the smoke of burning weeds. Forgive me,
I waste my heart in signs; let be. My bride,
My wife, my life. O we will walk this world,
Yoked in all exercise of noble end, 340
And so thro' those dark gates across the wild
That no man knows. Indeed I love thee; come,
Yield thyself up; my hopes and thine are one;
Accomplish thou my manhood and thyself;
Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust to me.' 345

Commenting on **lift thine eyes,** 327, Luce says: 'This is exasperating enough; but when we come to the insolent condescension of the words

Approach and fear not,

we have lost all patience with the man. And we are wrong; it is not the man, but the Medley.'

335. **Is morn to more.** Originally, **I scarce believe.**

337. **Weeds.** In the earlier editions this was **flowers.** Bayard Taylor comments: 'They gave us a vision of the autumnal haze, slowly gathering from myriads of flowers as they burn away in the last ardors of summer [!]. But now the last line . . . only paints for us an ordinary piece of farm-work. Besides, the repetition of *ee* in "reels" and "weeds" utterly destroys the original melody, which requires the open, expansive sound of "flowers."'

On the other hand cf. *Fortn. Rev.* II (1865). 402: 'The courage of writing "weeds," instead of the commonplace "flowers," has given the simile a truth beyond all praise.'

CONCLUSION.

So closed our tale, of which I give you all
The random scheme as wildly as it rose;
The words are mostly mine; for when we ceased
There came a minute's pause, and Walter said,
'I wish she had not yielded!' then to me, 5
'What if you dressed it up poetically!'
So prayed the men, the women; I gave assent;
Yet how to bind the scattered scheme of seven
Together in one sheaf? What style could suit?
The men required that I should give throughout 10
The sort of mock-heroic gigantesque
With which we bantered little Lilia first;
The women — and perhaps they felt their power,
For something in the ballads which they sang,
Or in their silent influence as they sat, 15
Had ever seemed to wrestle with burlesque,
And drove us, last, to quite a solemn close —
They hated banter, wished for something real,
A gallant fight, a noble princess — why
Not make her true-heroic, true-sublime? 20
Or all, they said, as earnest as the close?
Which yet with such a framework scarce could be.
Then rose a little feud betwixt the two,
Betwixt the mockers and the realists;
And I, betwixt them both, to please them both, 25
And yet to give the story as it rose,
I moved as in a strange diagonal,
And maybe neither pleased myself nor them.

14. **Ballads.** Cf. the Interlude.
24. **Realists.** Not used in the sense now current.

But Lilia pleased me, for she took no part
In our dispute; the sequel of the tale 30
Had touched her; and she sat, she plucked the grass,
She flung it from her, thinking; last, she fixed
A showery glance upon her aunt, and said,
'You — tell us what we are;' who might have told,
For she was crammed with theories out of books, 35
But that there rose a shout; the gates were closed
At sunset, and the crowd were swarming now,
To take their leave, about the garden rails.

So I and some went out to these; we climbed
The slope to Vivian Place, and turning saw 40
The happy valleys, half in light, and half
Far-shadowing from the west, a land of peace;
Gray halls alone among their massive groves;

35. Note the sarcasm.

39. The first edition has

And I and some went out, and mingled with them,

and immediately continues with 81.

40. **Slope.** Cf. Prol. 54, 55.

41 ff. Walters says (*Tennyson*, pp. 62–63): 'The second edition, called for in 1848, gave the poet an opportunity of dedicating *The Princess* to Henry Lushington, admittedly the most suggestive of his critics, and not the least ardent of his admirers from the first. It is said, moreover, that the mansion, Vivian Place, . . . was the home of the Lushington family, near Maidstone. One of the favorite haunts of Tennyson, after the departure of the family for Kent, was the district between Rochester and Maidstone, and over Blue Bell Hill, whence could be seen [quoting 41–47]. It was this part of the country which Dickens, writing to Forster, declared to be "one of the most beautiful walks in England"; and the famous "Kit's Coty House" (the "Tomb in the Wood"), dating from Saxon times, which Dickens knew so well, is believed to have suggested to Tennyson his similitude of the "eight daughters of the plow," each "like a Druid rock."'

42. **Far-shadowing.** Intransitive, with a suggestion of the passive.

Trim hamlets; here and there a rustic tower
Half-lost in belt of hop and breadths of wheat; 45
The shimmering glimpses of a stream; the seas;
A red sail, or a white; and far beyond,
Imagined more than seen, the skirts of France.

'Look there, a garden!' said my college friend,
The Tory member's elder son, 'and there! 50
God bless the narrow sea which keeps her off,

49–71. 'This passage did not appear till the third edition (published in 1850). We no doubt owe its insertion to the Revolution of 1848, when Louis Philippe, King of the French, was forced to abdicate, and a republic was established in place of the monarchy. It may be added that on 2nd December, 1851, Charles Louis Napoleon, President of the Republic, seized the supreme power by an act of unconstitutional violence, and was next year proclaimed Emperor of the French. This position he retained till 1870, when the empire was abolished and a republic reëstablished. The hysterical wildness and lack of reverence and restraint that characterize the politics of "Celtic Demos" are extremely abhorrent to Walter Vivian, who may in this respect be said to represent the more sane and sober temper of the English people. It may be noticed that Tennyson has on several occasions dwelt with pride on the orderly methods of reform that mark the history of his own country; cf. especially *Love Thou Thy Land* and *You Ask Me Why*' (Wallace).

Dawson comments: 'The poet's mind was no doubt full of the turmoil in France which broke out shortly after the publication of the first edition, but the poem is not improved as a work of art by the insertion of what must be called extraneous matter.'

Cf. Brooke, *Tennyson*, pp. 36–37: 'He saw but little of what France has done for us; he had no gratitude to her for her audacity, her swiftness, her logical expansion into form of the thoughts of progress.... He did not see our cool acceptance of the results for liberty which emerged after the mistakes of France had run their course. She bore the consequences of her mistakes, but in exhausting these she set the true form of certain ideas of liberty clear. We take the ideas she has set free, but we forget that she revealed them. There has been no ingratitude so great in the history of humanity as the ingratitude of Europe to France, and Tennyson

And keeps our Britain, whole within herself,
A nation yet, the rulers and the ruled —
Some sense of duty, something of a faith,
Some reverence for the laws ourselves have made, 55
Some patient force to change them when we will,
Some civic manhood firm against the crowd —
But yonder, whiff! there comes a sudden heat,
The gravest citizen seems to lose his head,
The king is scared, the soldier will not fight, 60
The little boys begin to shoot and stab,
A kingdom topples over with a shriek
Like an old woman, and down rolls the world
In mock heroics stranger than our own;
Revolts, republics, revolutions, most 65
No graver than a schoolboys' barring out;
Too comic for the solemn things they are,
Too solemn for the comic touches in them,
Like our wild Princess with as wise a dream
As some of theirs; God bless the narrow seas! 70
I wish they were a whole Atlantic broad.'

'Have patience,' I replied, 'ourselves are full
Of social wrong; and maybe wildest dreams
Are but the needful preludes of the truth;
For me, the genial day, the happy crowd, 75

represented with great vividness this ingratitude in England.' But cf. 72–74.

49. Garden. Cf. Gen. 13. 10, and Shakespeare, *Taming of the Shrew* I. i. 4.

51. Narrow sea. Straits of Dover. Cf. Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice* II. viii. 28–29:

> The narrow seas that part
> The French and English.

66. Barring out. The shutting out of a master from the schoolroom, as sometimes practised in England.

69. Tennyson, like Burke, is no friend to mere theorists.

The sport half-science, fill me with a faith.
This fine old world of ours is but a child
Yet in the go-cart. Patience! Give it time
To learn its limbs; there is a hand that guides.'

In such discourse we gained the garden rails, 80
And there we saw Sir Walter where he stood,
Before a tower of crimson holly-oaks,
Among six boys, head under head, and looked
No little lily-handed Baronet he,
A great broad-shouldered genial Englishman, 85
A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,
A raiser of huge melons and of pine,
A patron of some thirty charities,
A pamphleteer on guano and on grain,
A quarter-sessions chairman, abler none; 90

76. **Faith.** Dawson remarks: 'This strong faith runs through all of Tennyson's poems, causing them to be true "medicines for the mind." It is met in the earlier poems, especially in *The Golden Fleece* [*Year*], and in the conclusion of *Locksley Hall*, in the poems of middle age as here, and in No. 125 of *In Memoriam*, and in the very last published volume, — as stanza iii. of the *Children's Hospital*, and the sonnet *To Victor Hugo*. This healthful hope, pervading all his writings, is one of the secrets of the poet's popularity and influence.

79. **There is a hand that guides.** Knowles (*Nineteenth Century* XXXIII. 169): 'He formulated once, and quite deliberately, his own religious creed in these words: "There 's a something that watches over us; and our individuality endures; that 's my faith, and that 's all my faith." This he said with such a calm emphasis that I wrote it down (with the date) exactly and at once.'

80. See 38.

82. **Tower.** Circular group. — **Holly-oaks.** I adopt the reading of the first edition; the Macmillan *Works* has **holly-hoaks**; the word is a variant of *hollyhock*, which occurs in Tennyson.

87. **Pine.** Pineapples, a rarity in England, and frequently sold for a guinea each.

90. **Quarter-sessions.** A court held quarterly, taking cognizance of minor felonies and misdemeanors.

Fair-haired and redder than a windy morn;
Now shaking hands with him, now him, of those
That stood the nearest — now addressed to speech —
Who spoke few words and pithy, such as closed
Welcome, farewell, and welcome for the year 95
To follow; a shout rose again, and made
The long line of the approaching rookery swerve
From the elms, and shook the branches of the deer
From slope to slope thro' distant ferns, and rang
Beyond the bourn of sunset; O, a shout 100
More joyful than the city-roar that hails
Premier or king! — Why should not these great Sirs
Give up their parks some dozen times a year
To let the people breathe? — So thrice they cried,
I likewise, and in groups they streamed away. 105

But we went back to the Abbey, and sat on,
So much the gathering darkness charmed; we sat
But spoke not, rapt in nameless reverie,
Perchance upon the future man; the walls
Blackened about us, bats wheeled, and owls whooped, 110
And gradually the powers of the night,
That range above the region of the wind,
Deepening the courts of twilight broke them up

94. **Closed.** Included.
96. **Rose.** First edition, **arose.**
97. **Rookery.** Flight of crows. Cf. *Locksley Hall:*

As the many wintered crow that leads the clanging rookery home.

100. **Bourn.** Cf. *Hamlet* I. iii. 79.
102–4. For **should not, great, give,** and **to,** the first edition has **don't, acred, throw,** and **and.** What is the gain?
109. **Future man.** Cf. VII. 279.
110. See p. xlvi.
111. **Powers** is a disyllable.

Thro' all the silent spaces of the worlds,
Beyond all thought into the Heaven of Heavens. 115

Last little Lilia, rising quietly,
Disrobed the glimmering statue of Sir Ralph
From those rich silks, and home well-pleased we went.

113. **Broke them up.** Destroyed the courts of twilight by destroying the twilight, *i.e.* by changing the twilight into darkness.

115. **Heaven of Heavens.** So in 1 Kings 8. 27; 2 Chron. 2. 6; 6. 18; Neh. 9. 6. Cf. *Mariana in the South* 92.

116–8. 'Throughout the relation of the story Sir Ralph has been standing by, gay in his orange scarf and silken sash, a fitting type and illustration of the fantastic vagaries of the romance. Now that the conclusion has been reached, which perfects the manhood of the Prince and restores Ida to her womanhood, the Knight is disrobed of his feminine attire, and is seen once more standing forth in the armor that befits his sex and profession' (Wallace).

This quiet close is of the sort exemplified by the Greek tragedians. One is reminded of the words of Milton, at the end of *Samson Agonistes:*

> His servants he . . .
> With peace and consolation hath dismissed,
> And calm of mind, all passion spent.

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